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a master plan for parks, recreation and open space

city of jersey city

MARCH 1974

CITY OF
JERSEY CITY
CITY HALL • JERSEY CITY, N. J. 07302
(201) 434-3600

March 1974

Dear Citizens:

For the first time in the past 30 years, Jersey City has made major additions to its open space system. Through Federal grants of nearly $1.5 million, matched by City funds of the same amount, 6 new parks have been constructed and five others totally rehabilitated. Further, the State of New Jersey is prepared to begin construction of Liberty State Park which, for the first time in the City's history, will open the magnificent waterfront to the residents of Jersey City.

But these new parks are merely the beginning steps toward a much-needed expansion and renovation of Jersey City's entire park and playground system. The past few years have seen major deterioration of nearly every public space in the city.

The Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space has been prepared by the Office of Planning to analyze all aspects of our park and open space network, from administration and maintenance to programming, and on the basis of this analysis to recommend additions to the system, improvements to the existing facilities, and new approaches to administration, programming, and maintenance. This plan does not have a specific time framework; because of increased and severe cutbacks in Federal and State open space funding programs, a specific time guideline cannot be made at this time.

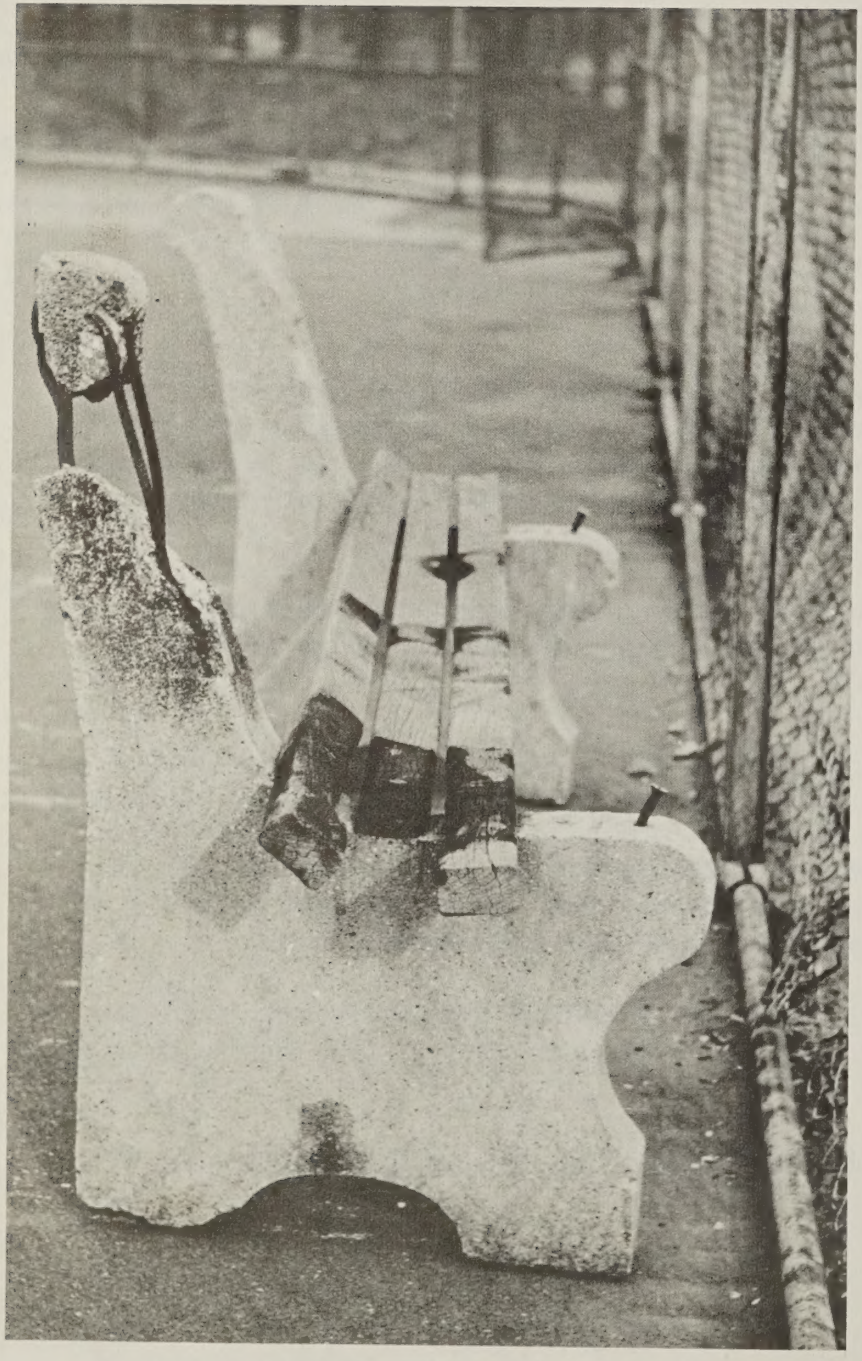
Despite this obstacle, it is the City's intention to begin immediately on a systematic program of restoring Jersey City's parks and open space network to its rightful place as one of the first such systems in the country.

Your support, cooperation, and suggestions are necessary if the City is to have the vital and necessary open space system its citizens deserve.

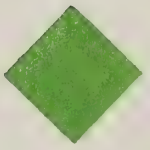
Sincerely,

Paul T. Jordan

Paul T. Jordan, M.D.
Mayor of Jersey City



a master plan for parks, recreation and open space



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A Master Plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space

"Recreation is a vital need in today's world. It is perhaps the greatest opportunity for self-expression, for doing what one really wants to do, not what one is forced to do to earn a living. The very phenomena which have brought leisure and income have also brought serious tensions for everyday life -- both working and living take place hurriedly, under crowded and often noisy conditions. Recreation under conditions of one's choosing is necessary to relieve these tensions...Man does not live for work alone; when he can play, he does."

The Race for Open Space
Regional Plan Association

"Urban Parks." To most of us, this expression conjures up visions of the great green spaces of Central Park, or the mobs of people packed on the honky-tonk spaces of Coney Island, or the picnic-packing hordes descending on Lincoln Park on a sweltering summer weekend. To others it brings visions of barren and dilapidated patches, rubble-strewn and desolate, devoid of activity. The true picture of urban parks probably lies somewhere in between. But for the people of Jersey City, the latter is perhaps the most realistic.

Jersey City's park system was built for another era, an era when walking and other generally passive activities were in vogue. Hamilton Park, Van Vorst Park, and Riverview Park are examples of parks which were built with pedestrian activity in mind. Lafayette, Bayside, and Leonard Gordon parks, among others, were built for both passive and active recreation, but with minimal provisions for the latter. Today Jersey City's parks stand as mute reminders of this era, with little relevance for the changing patterns of population and recreation.

The problem of the urban parks and its lack of relevance to the Jersey City of 1973 is summed up concisely in a publication by the Conservation Foundation.

"...the urban park...is still being planned and designed for what is perceived to be the recreational preferences and aesthetic tastes of middle-and upper-class users. The grand scale of space and design, popularized by

the Olmstead school of landscape architecture, is no longer applicable or particularly practical as a model for urban park development. Unfortunately, most of our core cities have become, or are in the process of becoming, cities of the poor. To these deprived urban dwellers public park and recreation facilities are perhaps one of the most important amenities in their environment. Yet we pay very little attention to providing them with the kind of opportunities they would find most enjoyable.

"In the treatment of urban parks and recreation, there is a tendency to visualize urban users as a homogeneous mass. Yet we know that the requirements of different segments of the urban population vary widely. Children, youth, the elderly, students, young unmarried persons, married couples with and without children, various income groups, people at different levels of education, persons on day and night work schedules, as well as other significant definable groups -- all of these people have different needs and requirements."

That Jersey City has reached an open space crisis, there is little question. And in this situation, Jersey City differs little from other older cities in the Northeast. Even New York's Central Park is no longer the showpiece it once was. But the one major difference between Jersey City and most other major Northeast corridor cities is that these other cities, at a time when it was economically feasible, built an extensive and first-rate park system, while Jersey City's was meager and third-rate to begin with. Consequently, even though maintenance and services are declining in the other cities' parks, it will be many years, assuming no changes in their fiscal or administrative priorities, before these parks reach the sad present level of the parks in Jersey City.

From its earliest origins, Jersey City has primarily been a blue-collar city, a city of factory, railroad, and dock workers, a city whose workers have had to toil long and hard for their families. To them, recreation was a luxury for which their schedule provided little time. The city government reflected this attitude, and consequently provided only token amounts of land for recreation purposes.

Meanwhile, other cities which were less specialized developed a greater population balance, with a substantial middle white-collar class, as well as a wealthy upper class, both of which were in short supply in Jersey City. In the other cities, these upper classes often assumed beneficent and patriarchal attitudes and saw fit to provide great open spaces and parks for the masses who were not fortunate enough to be able to get to the country, the mountains, or the seashore. For themselves, they built quiet and elegant residential squares, often privately owned and maintained.

Some public parks in Jersey City, up until the early twentieth century, had been donated as gifts of landowners and wealthy citizens. Parks

such as Van Vorst Park, given in 1835 by Cornelius Van Vorst, a member of the oldest family in the city, and Hamilton Square Park, given by John B. Coles, a wealthy developer, are examples. However, the idea of the purchase of play space with public funds was considered "wild, utopian, idealistic, and impracticable." (The men who purchased the land for Central Park in New York City were nearly indicted for their actions.)

The Jersey City Development Plan of 1920 was able to claim that Jersey City had assumed leadership in the country as far as parks and playgrounds were concerned. However, with foresight of the growth and needs of the city, the engineers who formulated the comprehensive plan proposed numerous recommendations for an expanded park system. With recognition of the fact that Jersey City would be limited in growth due to its lack of outlying districts, the engineers suggested that a minimum of 5 percent of the city's land be put aside for recreational purposes. In 1920, the existing parkland totalled 300 acres, half of the suggested minimum.

The proposed park system was to focus on Lincoln Park (formerly West Side Park), a 280 acre recreational area built in 1906 on unsightly swamp land centrally located in Jersey City, and supported with smaller neighborhood parks, playgrounds, parkways, and public beaches. Upon completion, the proposed park system would compare favorably with any system in the country. The existing system was comprised of 15 parks, 12 playgrounds, and 27 additional facilities varying from schoolyards to private property publicly equipped for recreation. The 1920 plan proposed 18 additional parks, 21 playgrounds, 12 parkways, and a bathing beach on the Hackensack River at the western-most extension of Lincoln Park.

Unfortunately, information on the reactions to the 1920 plan and its subsequent successes is not readily available. Although 50 years can witness a number of major changes, including the establishment or disestablishment of a park or playground, a study of the existing parks today reveals little evidence of the proposed recreation areas of the 1920 plan. Furthermore, a number of the originally existing parks cited in the plan are no longer in the condition they once were. For example, Lafayette Park was formerly distinguished by a lake surrounding a bandstand, accessible only by a carved wooden bridge; today, the bandstand remains, while the lake has since been filled in.

The park system that spurred the New Jersey Book of Achievement of 1921 to claim that the Jersey City Park System ranked among the leaders nationally in recreation areas and facilities has suffered from neglect and indifference. An article in the Jersey Journal in 1969 marked the decline of the park system by citing that Hudson County now has the smallest percentage of park land, per capita, in New Jersey and one of the smallest in the nation.

Aside from squares such as Van Vorst and Hamilton Parks, the few upper-and middle-

class families in Jersey City lacked the leadership, "social conscience," or foresight to provide an extensive park system throughout the city. While these classes stayed out of local government, for the most part, the government's priorities for the local population leaned to projects which had a more visible and measurable impact on the daily life of the blue-collar worker, such as schools and hospitals. The 1920 plan, which had provided needed foresight for park and recreation programming, went largely ignored.

What few priorities for parks there were leaned toward playgrounds for children rather than large scale parks. In a history of the city written in 1924, the following description of the local playground system was given:

"There is, perhaps, no other city where the playground system has been so largely developed as in Jersey City -- in fact, the welfare of the rising generation is kept constantly in mind and many of the activities carried on in these playgrounds are not only healthful but instructive and educational. Again, they contribute to the preservation of youthful life, for by actual statistics it is shown that since the general establishment of these playgrounds throughout the city, fewer accidents to children from playing in the streets have occurred. Trained instructors are employed for each playground, and the children are taught all kinds of healthful games and, mingled with their sports, simple industrial habits are favored by teaching the most judicious use of their hands..."

The pride of the city's park system was Pershing Field, in the Heights section of the City. A description of that facility, written in 1921, give some idea of the civic pride taken in Pershing Field.

"Pershing Field, on the site of the old abandoned reservoir at Manhattan Avenue, Central Avenue, and Summit Avenue is a credit to the City. Its fame has become nation-wide. A third of a mile cinder track, the finest, so experts declare, in this country, circles the athletic field. Inside of this oval is found baseball diamonds and a modern athletic field. During the winter months the infield is flooded and when frozen over makes one of the best and largest skating parks in the country. Overlooking the track and field is a beautiful community house, with all of the appointments of a place of this kind, shower baths, lockers, dressing rooms, and every requirement that an athlete demands is found on the ground floor. On the upper story is a bandstand in the center, with a rest room for women on one side. During the winter months the entire building is heated by steam, affording comfortable quarters for the thousands who journey to the big field to enjoy the skating.

"On top of a grass terraced incline is found six of the finest tennis courts in the country, and many of the leading experts in this line of sport have taken part in tournaments upon these courts, and have placed their stamp of approval on them.

"Gravel paths, with a bordering of grass a shrubbery on either side, lead to a spacious park in the center of the elevation. A sunken garden, beautiful flowers, and shrubbery mak this one of the show places of the city.

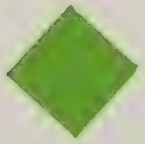
"To the south of the park is found one of th largest and best equipped kiddies' play fields the state. A huge wading pool that has afford thousands of kiddies many hours of enjoyment during the hot summer period was one of the first things that was installed. Swings, bask ball courts, slides, a big sand pit for the sma folks, and a spacious bit of ground for other games are many of the attractions of the play- ground. A pergola is one of the more recent added features of the playground portion of Pershing Field. This affords shade during the midday hours of the summer and is also used a dressing rooms for the tots who use the wadin pool. Not alone is it useful, but adds greatly the beauty of the largest park and playfield in the state.

"The playgrounds are supervised by a man who has studied playground work, and he has under him a corps of instructors who have pas the acid test and have proven their ability to look after the young and teach them the games that in their primary walk of life will bring for better men and women and, above all, better Americans."

The days where the city's park system coul be pointed to with any degree of pride have, unfortunately, long since passed. They have,

in fact, reached the stage where they are barely functional, let alone beautiful or pleasant. Lack of maintenance, vandalism, and lack of personal safety for park users have made most of the City's parks generally useless to the neighborhoods they were designed to serve.

This, then, is the dismaying point of departure for planning for future development and expansion of the Jersey City park system. What can the City do? Obviously it does not have the fiscal or manpower resources to embark on an immediate large scale parks improvement program. But there are, nevertheless, various public and private assistance programs and resources which the City potentially has at its disposal to begin to alleviate these problems and shortages. It is the purpose of this study to examine the resources and present a two-fold approach to a practical and realistic plan for open space. First, the plan will attempt to point out feasible methods to improve the existing facilities over the next few years; second, it will recommend substantial expansion of open space facilities to be carried out over a longer period of time, insofar as the City is fiscally able to do so.



IT IS THE AIM OF THIS PLAN

> "...To prevent the spread of urban blight and deterioration, to encourage more economical and desirable urban development and to help provide necessary recreational, conservation, and scenic areas -- in accord with plans for allocation of such land for open space purpose."[1]

Specifically, the goals of the plan are

* To recommend both a long-and short-range recreational and Open Space Program for Jersey City.

* To guide all local planning and development of recreational and open space facilities undertaken by both the private and public sectors in Jersey City.

* To coordinate development of parks and playgrounds with public school facilities.

* To acquire and expand public open and recreation space through various State and Federal programs.

* To recommend administrative changes that

[1]Federal Open Space Land Program: Public Law 87-70-42, USC 1500, Title VII

will generate a safe, more efficient and effective operational program for all recreational and open space facilities.

* To relate park design and construction to the needs and desires of the community.

Jersey City--1973: AN OVERVIEW

The sad shape and shortcomings of Jersey City's parks and open space system is but another reflection of the overall economic depression in which this City has, until recently, found itself. Consequently, there are many areas of neglect in the City which compete with parks, recreation, and open space for the limited amounts of City, State, and Federal funds.

Today the area faces many of the same problems that are confronting other older Northeastern urban centers. Hudson County's population dropped 6.6 percent from 1940 to 1970 (from 652,000 to 609,000) but Jersey City's population dropped 13.5 percent (from in excess of 300,000 to approximately 260,000). The ethnic composition of the area has always been mixed. In 1970, 31 percent of Jersey City's population was of foreign stock, either foreign-born or the children of foreign-born parents. Up until 1960, the majority were Italian, German, and Irish. In recent years there has been a large in-migration of both Blacks and Puerto Ricans, generally seeking employment and low-cost housing. In 1950 only 3.3 percent of Jersey City's population was Black; by 1960 it had risen to 13.5 percent, and by 1970 had reached 21 percent. The 1970 official census count of the Puerto Rican population was 6.2 percent.*

* This figure is disputed by many City officials and Puerto Rican leaders. The discrepancy is probably due to overlapping multiple questions used in the 1970 census counts to determine whether a respondent is of Spanish heritage, and the exclusion of third-generation Puerto Ricans from the Census definition.

The housing stock, mostly built for a blue-collar population, might have met zoning code and health standards at the time of its construction, but is now frequently deteriorated and obsolete. Many of the brick and wood-framed houses lack proper ventilation, central heating, and plumbing.

Since the end of World War II, Jersey City has lost much of its manufacturing and shipping business. From 1958 to 1967 there was a 16 percent decrease in the number of such establishments; the percentage loss in employment in these fields is even greater. Manufacturing firms wishing to expand have looked elsewhere for available space. Firms have also abandoned older factories for more modern facilities. The exodus from the City has been accelerated in recent years as expressways to the suburbs have been completed and municipal taxes soared.

The unemployment rate in Hudson County, as well as in Jersey City, has more than doubled in the past five years, and, as might be expected, falls hardest on low-income and minority groups. Because of this substantial unemployment Jersey City has been declared an economically depressed area by the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

Despite the many problems facing the City, we have heretofore unparalleled opportunities for taking action. The City, at last, is showing signs of a rebirth. The long vacant waterfront, perhaps the City's greatest asset, is to be developed with large scale new housing and shopping with good design and adequate, usable, well-planned open spaces as major criteria; there will also be an 1100 acre industrial park. To complement this effort, the State of New Jersey, after ten years' delay, is moving ahead in its plans for acquisition and development for Liberty State Park, a vast urban park in excess of 500 acres directly on the New York Bay waterfront. At the south end of the water-front, a large container shipping terminal is nearing completion. The financial district of Jersey City -- Exchange Place -- is the site of new office and residential construction. The PATH Transportation Center (an overall investment of approximately $85 million) will become a new focal point for Journal Square, the City's hub. Operation Breakthrough, adjacent to Journal Square, is a prototype for new inner city housing. At the same time there are new efforts being made, privately to maintain and up-grade the existing stock in other, older neighborhoods in the City. For example, the great potential of many of Downtown Jersey City's older brownstones is belatedly being recognized. Thus, it is in the "renaissance" framework that the Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space must be placed. Today the need for additional and improved open space and recreation in the inner city -- in Jersey City-- has never been more pressing.

standards for recreation and open space

The National Recreation Association, through intensive research into the needs of people and the experience of municipalities throughout the nation has developed a recommended standard of 10 acres of local recreation space for every 1,000 persons; it should be noted that this standard was developed some years ago, and in light of increased leisure time and recreation demands, probably should be increased. But, using the above standard, Jersey City, with its 1970 population of approximately 260,000 should have 2,600 acres of recreation space. This would amount to 25.7 percent of the city's total land area of 10,115 acres. At present, including the new parks being built under the Legacy of Parks program and the two county parks in the city, Jersey City has a total of approximately 430 acres of public recreation space. This amounts to 1.65 acres per 1,000 persons in the city, and 4.3 percent of the land area. Were it not for the county parks, which provide 281.5 acres of the total, the City government would be providing only 148 acres of park space, or less than 0.5 acres of park space per 1,000 persons.

On a neighborhood level, the lack of park space becomes even more appalling. The following chart presents the ratio of open space per thousand people, by neighborhood. Thus, it becomes evident that not a single neighborhood in the entire city of Jersey City meets, or even comes close to meeting, recommended national standards.

As bad as this is, the neighborhood breakdown does not really give a necessarily accurate picture of the park space problem in the City. On the positive side, for example, Marion has a total of 1.96 acres of park space, but is adjacent to Lincoln Park's 273 acres, so Marion's open space ratio is misleading. Conversely, another neighborhood, Greenville, has a total of 85.61 acres of park space, over half the city-owned total, but of this acreage, 65 is in the Roosevelt Stadium tract, which is generally underutilized and inaccessible except by automobile. Still other neighborhoods may have most of their park space in a concentrated area, rather than dispersed throughout, so that in effect many of the residents have no access at all to park space.

Obviously, the City will never be able to meet the 10-acre standard; there simply is no appreciable amount of open, uncommitted land left in the city or, for that matter, in the county. The city must therefore try to establish a more realistic goal: 3 acres per 1,000, while probably out of the grasp of the City, is a more reasonable goal. Fulfillment of this goal would

RECREATION SPACE IN JERSEY CITY

Neighborhood	1970 Pop. (000's)	Park Space Acreage	Acres Per 1,000
Downtown	34.9	18.97	.54
Greenville	62.2	85.61	1.38
Hudson City	60.6	33.73	.56
Marion	22.4	1.89	.08
Journal Square	16.8	0.29	----
Lafayette	16.4	10.25	.63
Bergen	47.2	278.76*	5.91

*includes Lincoln Park: 273.4 acres.

Source: Jersey City Division of Planning

provide the city with 780 acres of open and recreation space, almost twice what it now has, but still far short of what is desirable. It is highly unlikely that there can ever be a major, multi-acre park assembled by this city. Such increments in park space as do occur will be, for the most part, in small parcels of an acre or considerably less, and will be scattered throughout the city in order to provide for the recreation needs for as many of the city's residents as possible. Ideally, no resident need be more than a ten minute walk from a park or playground.

Jersey City, by its very nature, must make intensive use of all its recreation land. This means conveniently-spaced, more intensively developed parks with more active recreation programs. Park development, equipment, and personnel, in contrast with land acquisition, are not more costly in a densely built-up city than they are elsewhere, so it is in this facet of recreation that Jersey City can compete on an equal basis with suburban areas.

existing recreational facilities

Before any attempt is made to bring order to an otherwise chaotic and fragmented recreational system, it is necessary to inventory just what public facilities for recreation exist in the city. For the analytical purposes of this plan, the City is considered to have seven more or less distinct neighborhoods: Hudson City, Journal Square, Marion, Downtown, Bergen, Lafayette, and Greenville. While there is some blend at the peripheries, each of them has individual physical and/or social characteristics. In this plan, references to specific neighborhoods are made primarily for identification purposes, and in order to be able to describe the characteristics of the population each park is presumed to serve.

Not mentioned in the neighborhood analysis are the ten new or redeveloped parks included in the Legacy of Parks program initiated recently by the City. While construction has commenced on Phase I of the program, each park is discussed separately in a later section of this plan.

HUDSON CITY is the northernmost neighborhood of the City, and straddles the ridge of the Palisades which runs north-south through Hudson County. To the west it slopes steeply

PUBLIC PARK OR PLAYGROUND

PUBLIC SCHOOL

1 WASHINGTON PARK (COUN
2 PUBLIC SCHOOL 27
3 ● TERRACE AVE. PARK
4 PUBLIC SCHOOL 28
5 RIVERVIEW PARK
6 PUBLIC SCHOOL 8
7 LEONARD GORDON PARK
8 PERSHING FIELD
9 TUNULTY PARK
10 PUBLIC SCHOOL 6
11 PUBLIC SCHOOL 25
12 SGT. ANTHONY PLAYGROUN
13 DICKINSON HIGH SCHOOL

● LEGACY OF PARKS PROJECT

N

SCALE IN FEET
0 600 1800 3000

EXISTING PARKS & SCHOOL RECREATION FACILIT

HUDSON CITY

to the Jersey Meadows, while on the east it stops abruptly at the cliffs of the Palisades. Its 1970 population was 60,573, second in population and area only to the Greenville section of the City. The population is overwhelmingly White, with a Black population of less than one percent. Historically it is perhaps the most stable of the seven neighborhoods in the City, and is predominantly a middle class residential area, with a heavier concentration of adults and senior citizens than the city-wide averages: 61.1 percent of Hudson City residents are over the age of 25, as compared to the city-wide figure of 57.4 percent.

The area contains a variety of residential structures, with the two-family home being the most prevalent. Its median residential density*, 37.1 dwelling units per acre, is the exact median for the seven neighborhoods -- three higher and three lower. Housing densities vary from 43 units per acre, in the southeast portion of Hudson City, to 20.1 units per acre in a neighborhood of predominantly single-family houses west of Kennedy Boulevard.

* Residential density computed as the number of housing units per acre of total block area, excluding streets, blocks containing no residences, and significant concentrations within a block of non-residential uses which could be clearly delineated from the residential portions of that block.

Residential land uses predominate in the built-up areas of Hudson City. The one major commercial area stretches along Central Avenue, and is the City's second strongest, after Journal Square, the City's Central Business District. About two-fifths of the area designated Hudson City contains virtually no residential uses at all. This sector, stretching from the foot of the hill on the west side of Hudson City to the Hackensack River and Penhorn Creek, consists of strip commercial development along both sides of Tonnelle Avenue, with scattered industrial facilities and railroad yards to the west.

There are three major City parks in Hudson City: Pershing Field, Leonard Gordon Park, and Riverview Park, and a portion of one major County park, Washington Park.

Pershing Field, the largest of the Hudson City parks, covers three city blocks and is bordered by Summit, Manhattan, Central, and Reservoir Avenues. In addition to standard playground equipment, Pershing Field has one of the City's two outdoor ice-skating rinks. It also has a large playfield and track, with a small stadium at one end of this area; there is no outdoor lighting for the athletic field. There are two full-size basketball courts and two regulation baseball diamonds.

Riverview Park, on Palisades Avenue, is primarily a park for passive recreation. Because of its location on the edge of the New Jersey Palisades, it commands a spectacular view of

the New York skyline. The park is nicely shaded during warm weather, and contains general play equipment as well as two basketball courts.

Leonard Gordon Park covers most of the block bounded by Kennedy Boulevard, Manhattan Avenue, and Liberty Avenue. This is a pleasantly landscaped park, with gently rolling terrain. Its major features, aside from general walking and children's play areas, are basketball, tennis, and handball courts.

Washington Park, a recreation facility provided by Hudson County, is located partly in Jersey City and partly in Union City, and contains, in addition to play equipment and passive recreation areas, a large swimming pool which, unfortunately, is in such disrepair that it is not used.

Hudson City also has three playgrounds. Tumulty Park is located at the foot of Ogden Avenue, and Sergeant Anthony Park is located on Palisades Avenue, just north of Dickinson High School. Both have very little in the way of facilities, and are barely sufficient to serve only the immediate neighborhoods. Terrace Avenue Playground, at Terrace Avenue and Thorne Street, contains a deteriorated basketball court and playground. Because of the slope of the park, there are severe drainage problems which have contributed to its decline. (Terrace Avenue is a "Legacy of Parks" project.)

There are five public elementary schools in Hudson City, and one high school. P.S. 27 has an indoor pool, gymnasium, and two playground areas. P.S. 28 has only two blacktop free-play areas. P.S. 8 has two gymnasiums and a junior baseball diamond with one basketball standard. P.S. 6 has a playground, basketball court and a softball diamond. P.S. 23 has an indoor pool and a courtyard with basketball diamonds. Dickinson High School has an indoor pool and a gymnasium, as well as extensive lawn areas that are unused and unkempt.

JOURNAL SQUARE is the center of transportation, commerce, and retailing in Jersey City. It did not spontaneously become a major shopping area, as did Newark and Central Avenues, but developed as the area became a major transportation transfer point between local buses and the Pennsylvania Railroad (and, later, the Hudson tubes -- now PATH).

It is the smallest of the seven neighborhoods in area, and with a 1970 population of 16,769, the second smallest in that respect. The population composition of Journal Square is not typical of other neighborhoods in that it has the highest percentage of adults over the age of 25 (66.5), and, conversely, the lowest percentage of children under the age of 15 (17.7). It has the second highest median residential density (47.2 dwelling units per acre), ranging from 69.0 in the southwestern corner of the neighbor-

PUBLIC PARK OR PLAYGROUND

PUBLIC SCHOOL

1 PUBLIC SCHOOL 11

2 LA POINTE PARK

N

SCALE IN FEET

0 400 800 1600 2400 3000

EXISTING PARKS AND SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES

JOURNAL SQUARE

hood to 20.1 in the northwestern corner. Approximately 2.2 percent of the population is Black.

Journal Square is a highly urban and highly commercial area dominated by high-rise office and apartment buildings, with very little in the way of public recreation or open space. There are no facilities whatever for the thousands of people who work in Journal Square or pass through the area on a day-to-day basis.

LaPointe Park, a municipal playground, is located on Dekalb Avenue, in a residential section of Journal Square, and is the only park facility of any kind in the neighborhood. It has general play areas for children and sitting areas for adults, but no facilities for team or individual sports.

P.S. 11 (Martin Luther King, Jr. School), on Bergen Square, is the only public school in the Journal Square neighborhood; its major recreation facilities are indoor and outdoor basketball courts. In front of the school is a large, landscaped pedestrian and sitting area for use of school students, neighborhood residents, and Bergen Avenue shoppers.

MARION is a mixed land-use area on the west of the City, extending from Journal Square to the Hackensack River. More than half of the neighborhood is composed of non-residential uses. There is a substantial amount of industrial activity, of varying degrees of intensity, in the strip along the west side of the area, between Route 440, Tonnelle Avenue, and the Hackensack River.

Of its population of 22,398, 13.9 percent (3,106) were Black, a large percentage of whom live in one of the two public housing projects (Marion Gardens and A. Harry Moore) in the otherwise predominantly Italian neighborhood. The percentage of children under the age of 15 is slightly higher than the city-wide average.

There is no concentrated commercial area in the Marion section, although a secondary shopping area exists on West Side Avenue in the nearby Bergen neighborhood, and the stores of Journal Square are close at hand.

The median residential density of Marion is 40.1 dwelling units per acre, ranging from 47.7 in the area adjacent to Journal Square to 33.3 in the northern and western-most portions of the neighborhood.

Like its neighbor, Journal Square, Marion has little in the way of public parks and recreation facilities.

Marion Playground and Pool, located at Pavonia Avenue and West Side Avenue, contains one of the three outdoor public swimming pools in the City. The park is situated on both sides of Pavonia Avenue; the swimming and wading

PUBLIC PARK OR PLAYGROUND

PUBLIC SCHOOL

1 • MARION PLAY GROUND AND POOL
2 PUBLIC SCHOOL 23
3 PUBLIC SCHOOL 35
4 PUBLIC SCHOOL 39
5 PUBLIC SCHOOL 17
6 BOYD McGUINESS MEMORIAL

• LEGACY OF PARKS PROJEC

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SCALE IN FEET
0 600 1800 3000 4200

EXISTING PARKS & SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES

MARION

pools are on the north side, while on the south side is the playground area, with basketball and handball courts, and children's play equipment. (Marion Playground is a "Legacy of Parks" project.)

Boyd-McGuiness Memorial Park is a small "vest-pocket" park located at the intersection of Duncan Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard. It is a small, well-maintained sitting area, utilized primarily by senior citizens and mothers with young children.

There are four public elementary schools in Marion. Major recreation facilities at P.S. 17 and P.S. 35 are outdoor basketball courts. P.S. 39 has both indoor and outdoor basketball courts, as well as an indoor swimming pool. P.S. 23 has indoor and outdoor basketball courts, an indoor pool, and a macadam softball field.

DOWNTOWN is the oldest section of Jersey City. Situated in its entirety below the once-formidable barrier of the Palisades, it extends from the base of the hill to the banks of the Hudson River, and from the Hoboken City line south to the Morris Canal Basin. It is a neighborhood of contrasts -- extensive railyards, monolithic warehouses, high-rise apartment complexes, and quiet, tree-lined streets of nineteenth century brownstones. It is also the location of some of the city's most squalid tenements and abandoned buildings.

The Downtown section of the city is the most ethnically mixed of the seven neighborhoods, with very distinct areas of Black, Italian, and Puerto Rican citizens. 12.5 percent of the Downtown population is Black. At least 29.5 percent of the population is Puerto Rican.* The area has a very high percentage of children under the age of 15 (29.1 percent), and the lowest percentage in the city of persons age 60 or above (11.8).

The median residential density of 50.5 dwelling units per acre is the highest in the city. The range is from 107.2, in the area around Hamilton Park, to a low of 20.8 in the heavier commercial area at the foot of the Newark Avenue hill.

Downtown has a wide variety of industrial activity, scattered, for the most part, around the periphery of the neighborhood. Most of the industries, too, are situated to take advantage of proximity to specific forms of transportation--rail, water, or highway.

Newark Avenue, once the central business district of Jersey City, has long since lost that distinction, but is nevertheless a strong shopping area, catering primarily to neighborhood residents. Many of its shops are oriented to the Puerto Rican consumers in Downtown.

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* There is little doubt that the Puerto Rican population count is higher than indicated here, since the U.S. Census Tract information distinguishes only those census tracts where the Puerto Rican count is 400 or more.

PUBLIC PARK OR PLAYGROUND

PUBLIC SCHOOL

1		16 TH. STREET PLAYGROUND
2		PUBLIC SCHOOL 37
3		HAMILTON PARK
4	●	4 TH. & ERIE PARK
5		PUBLIC SCHOOL 2
6		TERRIAGO PARK
7		MARY BENSON PARK
8		PUBLIC SCHOOL 5
9	●	1 ST. STREET PLAYGROUND
10		FITZGERALD PARK
11	●	CITY HALL PARK
12	●	MERCER STREET PARK
13		PUBLIC SCHOOL 9
14		FERRIS HIGH SCHOOL
15		OLD COLONY FIELD
16		MERSELES STREET COURTS
17		VAN VORST PARK
18		PAULUS HOOK PARK
19		PUBLIC SCHOOL 16
20		BRIGHT STREET PLAYGROUND
21		PUBLIC SCHOOL 3
22		MELUSO PARK
23		TURNPIKE FIELD
24		ENOS JONES PARK

● LEGACY OF PARKS PROJECT

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SCALE IN FEET

0 600 1800 3000 4200

EXISTING PARKS & SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES

DOWNTOWN

Van Vorst Park and Hamilton Park are two of the City's most intimate parks. Both are basically residential squares, surrounded by nineteenth century brownstone and brick townhouses. Van Vorst Park, which was originally funded and established by the Van Vorst family, is located on Montgomery Street, one block from City Hall, and is characterized by a sense of intimacy and relationship to the buildings which surround it. It is primarily a passive park, with a small area devoted to general playground equipment. Hamilton Park, located toward the north end of Downtown, is a similar, though larger, residential square, and, in addition to playground equipment, contains both tennis and basketball courts.

Mary Benson Park, located just off Newark Avenue, adjacent to the New Jersey Turnpike, is basically a softball field. There is little or no landscaping, and no other facilities.

Across the street from Mary Benson Park is Terriago Park, which contains a newly installed bocci court, several basketball courts, and general play equipment. This is one of the best maintained playgrounds in the City because of local community pride and efforts.

A large, active recreational complex is located on Montgomery Street near Ferris High School. Old Colony Field, the largest of these facilities, is the site of one of the three outdoor public swimming pools in the City. In addition, there is a football/baseball field and a field house. Across the street and under the New Jersey Turnpike are the Merseles Street basketball courts. At the intersection of Merseles and Bright Streets is the Turnpike Little League Field. Much of this complex will be taken by the Montgomery Street Urban Renewal Project, and facilities will be relocated to a nearby location by the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency.

Paulus Hook Park is located in the extreme southeastern corner of Downtown, and is situated on all four corners of the intersection of Grand and Washington Streets. Three of the four parcels are used as passive sitting areas, and the fourth is used as a playground for P.S. 16. The Bright Street Playground is presently being used to house a temporary school structure. Maluso Park is an all-but-abandoned passive recreation area at the corner of Colden, Bates, and Brunswick Streets. Fitzgerald Holata Park is a passive recreation area (benches and landscaping) at the intersection of Grove Street and Newark Avenue. This park was recently remodeled by the PATH Corporation as the entrance to the Grove Street Station. The First Street Playground, located near First and Brunswick, was used until recently as basketball courts, but has been vandalized and is currently abandoned (this is a "Legacy of Parks" project). The Sixteenth Street Playground, at Sixteenth and Erie, is equipped with a blacktopped junior softball diamond. Enos Jones Memorial Field, formerly Oakley Oval, is being renovated under a Federal Open Space Grant.

There are six public elementary schools in Downtown, and one high school. P.S. 3 and P.S. 37 have both indoor and outdoor basketball courts. P.S. 16 has an indoor pool. P.S. 9 has indoor and outdoor basketball courts, and a softball diamond. There are no major recreation facilities at P.S. 2.

Ferris High School, a new facility, has three gymnasiums, an indoor pool, two tennis courts, a baseball diamond, and outdoor basketball courts.

BERGEN is also a neighborhood of contrasts. Predominantly a residential neighborhood, it contains some of the City's largest and most expensive housing as well as some its worst housing. Two major north-south streets bisect the neighborhood -- Kennedy Boulevard and Bergen Avenue. Because of the distinct and diverse types of housing and social patterns in this neighborhood, Bergen probably has less self-identity than the others. For example, about one half of the designated "Model Cities" neighborhood is in Bergen, and this area would logically identify with the remainder of the Model Cities area, the bulk of which is in Lafayette. Other sections of Bergen would identify with Greenville or Marion and Journal Square.

With a 1970 population of 47,250, Bergen is the third most populous of the seven neighborhoods. Of this population, 41 percent (or 19,390) is Black. Most of the census tracts within Bergen where more than 50 percent of the population is Black are in or adjacent to the Model Cities sections of the neighborhood.

Housing densities in Bergen vary from 72.0 housing units per acre in the eastern edge of Bergen to 22.9 in the southwestern corner, an area of predominantly one-and two-family homes. The average housing density is 34.5, second lowest in the City.

There is one strong retailing area in Bergen, along West Side Avenue. Though not as strong as either Central or Newark Avenues, it is nevertheless a major secondary shopping area serving the western sections of Bergen and Marion. Remnants of other once-strong secondary shopping areas still exist along Jackson and Monticello Avenues, in the eastern portion of the area.

Bergen, for its land area and population, has very few City parks and playgrounds. Arlington Park is a small, triangular park at the intersection of Grand Street and Arlington Avenue. Although it is primarily a passive area, it contains a general playground area and basketball courts.

The Harmon Street Pool, located just off Communipaw Avenue, is the third of the City's public outdoor swimming pools.

PUBLIC PARK OR PLAYGROUND

PUBLIC SCHOOL

1 ●	McGINLEY SQUARE PARK	
2	PUBLIC SCHOOL	18
3	PUBLIC SCHOOL	12
4	LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL	
5	HARMON STREET POOL	
6	LINCOLN PARK (COUNTY)	
7	PUBLIC SCHOOL	33
8	ARLINGTON PARK	
9 ●	MODEL CITIES PARK	
10	PUBLIC SCHOOL	14
11	PUBLIC SCHOOL	24
12	VIRGINIA AVE. PLAYGRO	
13	LT. R.B. GROVER MEMORIAL	

● LEGACY OF PARKS PROJECT

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SCALE IN FEET

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EXISTING PARKS & SCHOOL RECREATION FACILI

BERGEN

Virginia Avenue Playground is a small play area with general play equipment. It is located between Jackson and Bergen Avenues in the southern part of the neighborhood.

There is one "vest-pocket" type park facility located in Bergen. Lt. R.B. Grover Memorial Park, a small passive park, is located on Kennedy Boulevard at Broadman Parkway, across the street from Snyder High School.

McGinley Square, at the intersection of Montgomery Street and Bergen Avenue, is being renovated under the Legacy of Parks Program.

The largest park in Hudson County is located in Bergen. Lincoln Park, operated by the Hudson County Parks Commission, is a 280 acre tract, stretching from Kennedy Boulevard to the Hackensack River. It contains 18 tennis courts, 5 baseball diamonds, a children's playground area and wading pool, a lake, large passive areas, a pitch and putt golf course, and a private restaurant.

Five public elementary schools and one high school are located in Bergen. P.S. 33, P.S. 24, and P.S. 18 have outdoor basketball courts. P.S. 12 and P.S. 14 have indoor courts. P.S. 24 and Lincoln High School have indoor swimming pools.

LAFAYETTE is the smallest, in population, of the seven neighborhoods, although it is the second largest in area. The population is virtually contained in the western one-third of the neighborhood; the remainder consists of extensive railroad yards along the Hudson River waterfront, as well as a number of antiquated loft-type manufacturing buildings. Almost all of the populated area is within the designated "Model Cities" area.

The median residential density of Lafayette is 35.7 dwelling units per acre, ranging from 45.5 to 31.7.

50.6 percent of the 1970 population (16,437) were Black. This neighborhood has the highest proportion of children under the age of 15 (29.2 percent) and the lowest proportion of adults (50.0 percent).

There are only two public parks in Lafayette. Lafayette Park has a large passive area, a basketball court, and a general playground area. High School Field is located on Montgomery Street, just west of the Old Colony Field complex in Downtown. It consists of a football field and a baseball diamond, with a stadium seating area.

P.S. 22 is the only public school in Lafayette. It is located across the street from Lafayette Park, which is used as its playground. It also has an indoor basketball court and an indoor swimming pool.

PUBLIC PARK OR PLAYGROU

PUBLIC SCHO

1 • MODEL CITIES PARK

2 PUBLIC SCHOOL 22

3 LAFAYETTE PARK

• LEGACY OF PARKS PROJE

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SCALE IN FEET

0 600 1800 3000

EXISTING PARKS & SCHOOL RECREATION FACILIT

LAFAYETTE

GREENVILLE is the largest of the seven neighborhoods, in both population and area. It is the only neighborhood which extends all the way across the City, and fronts on both Newark Bay and New York Bay. Originally one of the separate communities which was consolidated into the metropolitan area of Jersey City, the neighborhood has been extended on both the east and west sides by landfill.

It is predominantly a residential area; 54.9 percent of the homes are one-or two-family structures; it probably has more recent home construction than any other neighborhood. There are several secondary shopping areas; Jackson Avenue is the strongest. Large major discount and shopping center complexes are located along Route 440 in the extreme western edge of Greenville. Industrial development is located along the New York Bay waterfront and along Route 440 on the west side.

The 1970 population was 62,232, of which 30.0 percent (18,671) was Black.

Greenville has the lowest median residential density of the seven neighborhoods: 32.3 dwelling units per acre. The range is from 42.1 in the area around Snyder High School to 26.7 in the southwestern corner, near Roosevelt Stadium.

There are five major parks in Greenville. Audubon Park is one of the most active in the City; it contains a passive park area, general playground area, hard surfaced basketball courts, a handball court, two illuminated tennis courts, and restrooms. The park has a heavy tree cover. Columbia Park, also known as Greenville Memorial Park, is primarily a passive park, with a general playground area. The Bayside Park, because of its varied topography, is potentially one of the City's most pleasant parks. It is also one of the largest, and contains four tennis courts, a large playground area, basketball and handball courts, a multi-purpose field for football and softball, restrooms, and several large, shady, passive areas. The upper part of the park commands a spectacular view of the New York Harbor. Roosevelt Stadium is the 22,000 seat structure that was once the home of minor league football and baseball teams; the Brooklyn Dodgers played there in the late 1950's, and the New York Giants are currently using it for practice. It is also being used for high school and college football games, track events, and for outdoor concerts. Occasionally it is used for convention gatherings of large group There is also an outdoor ice-skating rink. The stadium is surrounded by a large and pleasant walking area along Newark Bay. To the north of the main stadium groups is an area known as Roosevelt Stadium Annex, which contains several ballfields. Country Village Park contains softball fields, tennis courts, and a general playground area.

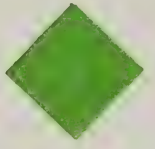
Greenville has several smaller playgrounds and parks. Skinner Memorial Park is a small plot at the corner of Wilkinson and Randolph Avenues which is basically a sitting area.

EXISTING PARKS & SCHOOL RECREATION FACIL

GREENVILLE

Triangle Park, at the intersection of Old Bergen Road and Rose Avenue, is a large passive area within the intersection. A similar area, Martiniuk Park, is located at the intersection of Pamrapo Avenue and Old Bergen Road. The Claremont Avenue Playground, at Arlington Avenue, is a small blacktopped area with general apparatus and basketball standards. Woodland Hue Playground is a small park at the intersection of Woodland and Linden Avenues which contains a general playground area and an illuminated, paved basketball court.

Two of the public elementary schools in Greenville (P.S. 20 and P.S. 29) have no major recreational facilities. P.S. 15 and P.S. 34 have outdoor basketball courts. P.S. 38 has both indoor and outdoor basketball courts, while P.S. 41 has only an indoor court. Both P.S. 30 and P.S. 40 have indoor and outdoor courts, as well as softball fields. P.S. 40 also has an indoor swimming pool. Snyder High School has an indoor pool and gymnasium.



administration

The Division of Parks and Recreation is a division within the Department of Human Resources, and has two major functions:

1. Maintenance of all City parks and playgrounds;
2. Administration of various recreation programs.

It is separated into the Bureau of Parks and the Bureau of Recreation.

The primary function of the Bureau of Parks is maintenance; it maintains all of the grounds and equipment in the City's parks, playgrounds, malls, and public areas. To perform these tasks there are 65 employees. The central office staff consists of the Superintendent of the Bureau of Parks and a principal clerk. The Superintendent is directly responsible to the Director of the Division of Parks and Recreation.

Maintenance of the City's major parks is the responsibility of 47 employees: 3 District supervisors, 9 foremen, 1 equipment operator, 4 maintenance repairmen, and 30 employees in the caretaker/groundskeeper/laborer categories. In addition to maintaining the major parks, these employees are at times directed by the District Supervisors to perform maintenance work at the smaller parks and playgrounds.

There is one recreation maintenance crew, with 6 employees: a recreation maintenance supervisor, 2 recreation maintenance men, and 3 laborers/groundskeepers. Their tasks include the repair and installation of playground equipment and upkeep of the various baseball-softball fields in the city.

Maintenance of the grounds and structure at Roosevelt Stadium is performed by 6 employees: the Stadium Supervisor, a foreman, a building maintenance repairman, and 3 laborers/groundskeepers.

Finally, there is one roving crew of four employees - 1 foreman, 1 driver, and 2 laborer/caretakers - whose assignment is to maintain the smaller parks and playgrounds, as well as the traffic islands throughout the city. They can also be assigned to assist any of the crews stationed at the major parks if any of them are in need of extensive clean-up.

In addition to these 65 employees, the Bureau of Parks has 20 employees are paid through the Federal Emergency Employment Act; they are scattered throughout the various groups discussed above. This program, however, is scheduled for termination by the Federal Government and will be phased out over a two year period. It has not yet been determined whether the City will be able to place these employees on the City payroll if the positions are jeopardized.

The Bureau has no responsibility for maintenance of school playgrounds or recreation centers located at schools. Employees of the Board of Education perform these duties. Nor does the Bureau have any responsibility for the maintenance of the two County parks in the City - Lincoln Park and Washington Park.

The Bureau of Recreation develops and administers a wide range of outdoor and indoor activities for children, teenagers, and senior citizens. It employs a total of 76 people, six of whom work in a full-time capacity. Two of them are Assistant Superintendents who are directly responsible to the Division Director. One is in charge of sports and leagues, and the other coordinates all other programs.

Under the Assistant Superintendents are 4 supervisors. One is responsible for aquatics, one for handicrafts, and two for general recreation.

There are 12 Center Directors who divide their time among the fourteen recreation centers (public schools); they are responsible for activities at each of the recreation centers which are open during the week. The Center Directors, as well as the 58 recreation leaders, are employed on a part-time basis only. Of these 70 part-time employees, 35 work 5-1/2 hours per day, 5 days per week (27-1/2 hours). The other 35 work 2-1/2 hours per day, 5 days per week (12-1/2 hours). The recreation centers are open only on week-day evenings, except for five which are open on Saturdays and staffed entirely by volunteers.

The Bureau relies heavily on volunteers, and over the course of a year, some 150 persons aid in almost all phases of the recreation program.

In addition to the 14 centers run by the Bureau of Recreation, there are six other centers in the Jersey City Model Cities area which are staffed by 50 part-time employees of the Model Cities agency. The Jersey City Housing Authority and the Jersey City Free Public Library also run various recreation programs.

Problem Areas: Condition of Parks

Most of Jersey City's parks and playgrounds are in poor condition, having suffered from years of neglect as well as recent waves of vandalism. There are a number of specific factors which have contributed to this neglect:

(1) Size of Staff. In 1963, what is now the Bureau of Parks had 235 employees, including 29 park patrolmen. In 1964 the staff was reduced to 144 positions, and the park patrolmen were completely eliminated. Since 1964 the staff has slowly been reduced to the point where there are 65 positions provided for in the current budget to perform the actual maintenance in all of the City's approximately 150 acres of parks, playgrounds, traffic islands, and other public open spaces.

(2) Vandalism. A prime factor in the decline of the City's park system is the lack of security in the parks. With the elimination in 1964 of the Park Police, and the relative absence, until recently, of foot patrolmen in the neighborhoods, the parks have become havens for derelicts and addicts. The lack of personal safety is a very definite factor in the decline in usage by neighborhood residents. Consequently, the parks become even more of a gathering place for undesirables. The degree of vandalism has become so extreme that it has become impossible for the Bureau of Parks to keep up with the repairs. As a result, many of the City's parks are now in a totally dilapidated state.

(3) Fragmentation of Work Assignments. The Bureau of Parks is responsible only for the routine maintenance of the parks. Major work, such as plumbing or the repair of sidewalks, is performed by the Division of Building Repair in the Department of Public Works. This Division is responsible for major work in and around all City property. When the Director of Parks and Recreation needs major work performed in the parks, he must make a formal request to the Director of Building Repair. This request is then placed on a priority list with work that must be performed on other city property. As a result,

major repairs are not often performed in the parks at times when they are most essential, if, indeed, they are performed at all.

(4) Equipment Maintenance. Major repairs to equipment used in the parks, such as trucks and power mowers, are performed by the Division of Automotive services. Here again, the Director of Parks and Recreation must have the needed repairs to his equipment placed on a priority list, with the result of not having the equipment available when it is needed.

(5) Scheduling of Work Assignments. There is no formal schedule of work assignments for park maintenance personnel. Employees are assigned to various parks with little regard to actual workload and responsibility or accountability.

Problem Areas: Bureau of Recreation

There are approximately forty potential recreation centers in Jersey City. These include the public elementary and secondary schools and the branches of the Jersey City Free Public Library. However, with the limited staff of six full-time and seventy part-time employees, the Bureau only has the capability of running programs at fourteen centers. The extent and variety of recreation programs are limited primarily by the size of the staff.

Problem Areas: Tree Planting and Trimming

The City has no overall tree-planting or tree-trimming program. Tree trimming is handled on an "on call" basis. In addition, many of the existing curbline trees are being used for the installation of traffic signs, with the signs nailed directly into the trees. Not only is this unattractive, but the trees are also being severely damaged by this practice.

Problem Areas: The Civil Service System

Employees in the Division of Parks and Recreation are appointed through the New Jersey Civil Service System. The problems which arise from this practice have been fully documented elsewhere; suffice it to say that once an employee obtains permanent status, discipline can become a serious problem. This combined with optional union membership and low salaries at many levels, seriously affects the efficiency and morale of the Division.

Problem Areas: Lack of Innovation

The Division of Parks and Recreation is still using park equipment and programs that were geared to the 1950's. Park benches and

facilities are uninviting, unattractive, and subject to a high degree of vandalism. In addition, programming is largely geared to Little League baseball and other "boy" sports, with insufficient emphasis placed on more varied recreation activities such as water sports, crafts, arts, theater and dramatics, and gymnastics.

Administrative Recommendations

During the course of this study it has become apparent that the condition of parks and recreation programming in Jersey City is due in no small part to the methods by which they are administered. This is not necessarily the fault of those persons in direct charge of facilities and programming or of their superiors, but the entire program is a good example of a municipal bureaucracy which renders its program both inefficient and ineffective. The administrative recommendations which follow are based, by necessity, on a brief analysis. Final implementation of these or any other recommendations should be based on a complete and professional management review of the Division of Parks and Recreation.

1. The staffs of both the Bureau of Parks and the Bureau of Recreation should be increased gradually to improve park maintenance and to expand recreation programs. As an interim measure, the park maintenance staff could merely be reorganized, however, to provide a much more efficient and productive approach to park maintenance; it is not within the scope of this study to recommend such organizational changes, but it is strongly suggested that an independent efficiency study be made and that any recommendations from that study be swiftly implemented. The real need for increased staff is in the Bureau of Recreation in order to expand the programs in the after-school recreation centers and at the playgrounds and parks during the summer.

2. A definite agreement should be reached with the Jersey City Police Department to provide more personal security in the City's parks. One possible solution is to create a patrol system, now that the number of foot patrolmen has been increased, whereby they would use the parks as the center of their patrol. This would provide a much greater degree of protection in the parks both during the daytime and at night. Also, policemen in the parks must rigidly enforce anti-littering ordinances (Sections 3 and 22 of the City Code) and the dog-nuisance ordinance (Section 6-18 (b) of the City Code).

3. There must be more cooperation and coordination among the various divisions of the Department of Public Works and the Department of Human Resources, insofar as it affects park maintenance. This lack of coordination is particularly evident when the Division of Parks and Recreation must

depend upon the Division of Automotive Services for repairs of vehicles essential to park maintenance; under present policy such repairs are made only when, and if, Automotive Services time can be spared. Obviously, other city agencies have need of automotive services as well, but the result of present policy is that this much-needed park and public space maintenance is deferred even longer and, in many cases, what might have been minor repairs now become major. This may be a case where centralized automotive repair services are not necessarily the most efficient method. Parks and Recreation should consider hiring at least one skilled mechanic for their own equipment maintenance.

4. In recent months there has been a very fragmented approach to park planning evident in this city. At the same time, the Division of Planning, the Model Cities Agency, the Department of Administration, and the Redevelopment Agency have all been planning or constructing parks throughout the city. In order to coordinate new park projects and set the priorities on what the City's recreation needs are, a resolution should be adopted by the City Council to the effect that new parks should not be constructed and major changes should not be made in existing parks without consulting the Director of Parks and Recreation, the Director of Planning, and the residents who live near the facility.

5. In order to improve the physical appearance of parks and provide a greater level of supervision, it would not be impractical to hire for part-time employment many senior citizens living on fixed incomes, and who no doubt would be able and willing to earn this pay and at the same time perform a public function.

park user survey

In November 1973 the staff of the Jersey City Division of Planning prepared a questionnaire about the City's parks for distribution to public and parochial high school students, senior citizens, and others, throughout the City. Approximately 2,000 questionnaires were distributed, with a response factor of nearly 80 percent. Included were specific questions on frequency of use, activities, proximity to parks, safety, and maintenance, as well as several subjective questions. On questions which could be answered by "yes" or "no", such as "Do you think the City's parks and/or recreation facilities are safe?", or "Do you use the park and/or recreation facilities at night?", the respondent, if a negative answer was given, was asked why the answer was negative. There was also space provided for general comments and ideas regarding the City's parks.

The answers to the specific questions were helpful primarily in reinforcing the general knowledge the Division of Planning had about the park system. For example, the respondents were asked for what activities did they use the parks; their answers fell into the generally predictable pattern found in the following table.

General usage of the parks was reflected by the questionnaires; 47.2 percent of the respondents used the parks from 0 to 10 times per year, and 33.6 percent used them over 25 times. Not surprisingly, 48.2 percent of the male respondents used them over 25 times, while only 23.3 percent of the female respondents did likewise.

FREQUENCY OF PARK USAGE ACTIVITY

Activity	% of Park Users
Walking	66.7
Sitting	59.6
Basketball	47.2
Football	41.0
Baseball	33.2
Running/Jogging	31.8
Ice-Skating	29.7
Tennis	20.1
Play Equipment	20.1
Swimming	11.6
Roller Skating	6.5
Bike Riding	3.8
Hockey	0.5

The question of safety in the parks, by day and by night, was correlated with the respondents' answers of how frequently they used the parks. There was a direct relationship between sex, frequency of visits, and day or night usage. For both sexes, the "yes" answers, for both day and night, increased with the respondents' frequency of visits. In all cases, more males than females gave "yes" answers.

Asked whether they thought the City's parks and recreation facilities were clean and well maintained, the responses were overwhelmingly negative.

The most interesting and informative sections, however, were the comments supporting the direct answers they gave. For example, some of the most frequent criticisms dealt with police and the parks, although there were contradictory points of view. While nearly all respondents cited the problems of crime and lack of personal safety in the parks, many of them felt that the police were unnecessarily indiscriminate in chasing them out of the parks, particularly at night. One 17 year old boy from Hudson City said, "I think that we should be able to hang out in parks and not be chased every time. This is why the parks don't appeal to me. The police harrass you for no reason." Another student said he used the parks at night, "but people yell or call the police if they see kids in the park after 9 or 10 p.m., even if they are only playing basketball or just sitting down." Presenting the opposing point-of-view, however, a student said, "There aren't any policemen and sometimes people may jump you for your money or just for the fun of jumping or beating somebody." A 17 year old girl said, "I would like to see policemen patrolling the parks, day or night--but as they say, they are too busy. The only time they'll show up is after someone has been raped or stabbed. Then its important."

The final question was, "Do you have any specific ideas for types of parks, programs, or special facilities you would like to see the City provide?" Because of space limitations, it is not possible to present all the thoughtful comments made, but a representative group is given below.

....."We need more programs so we can keep our little sisters and brothers out of trouble."

....."Its funny, but just swinging on a swing can make a child happy, and I don't think that's too much to ask for."

....."More places for girls to use!"

....."There should be special summer programs for all the kids, not just the disadvantaged."

....."I think the City's public facilities should be an important part of community life, with the members of the community maintaining as well as utilizing the facilities."

....."Vest-pocket parks are a good idea, but not ones which are great slabs of concrete with a few benches."

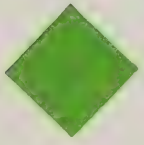
....."We need more maintenance crews. Hire some senior citizens who are able and willing to supplement their social security income."

....."They should have programs to teach kids how to play team sports."

....."I think it would be a good idea to institute a park counselor program. During the summer it can give little kids a chance to use the parks and have an organized day instead of roaming the streets. It would also give more teenagers jobs during the summer."

....."Help the police realize that the parks aren't the safest place, but also that sometimes its the only place to hang out, so if they are doing nothing wrong, don't chase them."

....."The City parks should have things to entertain the youths with, such as live entertainment and movies."



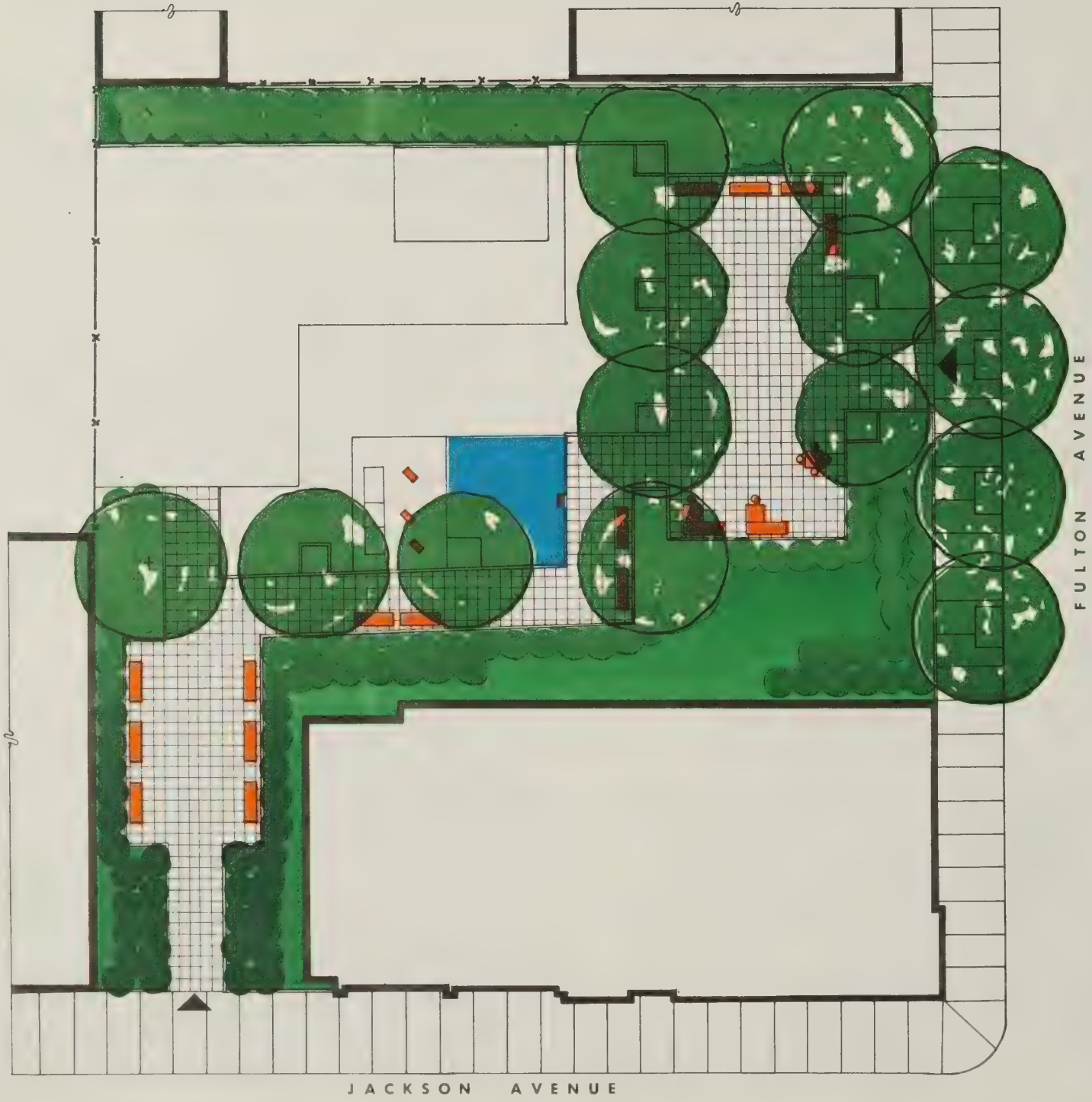
legacy of parks

The Legacy of Parks Program is administered by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Under this program HUD matches every dollar spent by eligible public agencies for the acquisition and development of open space land.

In August 1972 the Division of Planning submitted an application to HUD for a matching grant of $350,000, and received approval for the full amount in February 1973.

The $700,000 is being used to develop five new open space areas and thoroughly redevelop five others. Rather than becoming involved in complicated negotiations dealing with property acquisitions, the Division chose to develop the new parks on sites which the City already owned and in areas where there was a lack of open space.

In developing the plans for the parks, the Division encouraged citizen participation. The Model Cities agency planned the two parks in the Model Neighborhood with the involvement of the Model Neighborhood Community Planning



FULTON
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Council and its Task Force on Parks and Recreation. The eight other parks were planned with the active participation of the Citizens Advisory Council and other community, social and merchant organizations.

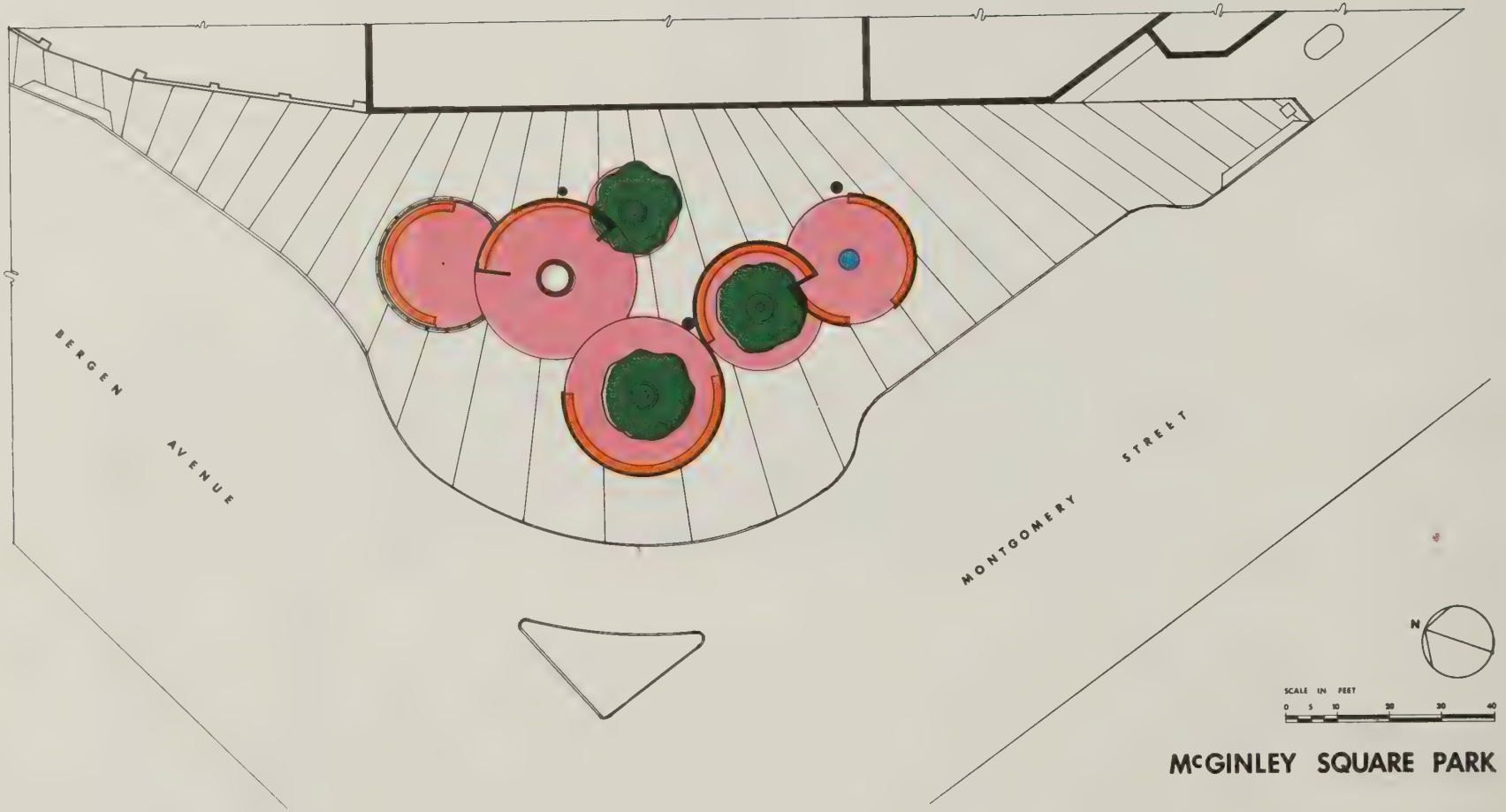
Construction of the parks began in June 1973, and is to be completed by April. The ten open spaces, their locations, sizes, and facilities are described below.

Redeveloped Parks

Pavonia Avenue Park. (also known as Marion Playground). At present there is an asphalt-covered playground at the corner of West Side Avenue and Pavonia Avenue, in the Marion section of the City. Following several discussions with interested residents of the area, it was decided to replace this playground with a regulation Little League field. This field, which can also be used for softball, occupies 1.06 acres. A small, passive, sitting area will be located beyond the outfield. A somewhat unique feature of this field will be the removable fence in the outfield. After the baseball season, the fence can be removed and the field can be used for football, soccer, and other field sports. In addition the field will be floodlighted so that night activities will be possible.

Terrace Avenue Park. This park, located at the corner of Thorne Street and Terrace Avenue in the Hudson City section of the City, has deteriorated severely. The proposed redevelopment will increase the size of the park by approximately 30 percent, and will include a tot-lot, a spray shower, and a passive area with game tables. A basketball court will also be included, and will be arranged so that it can be used for either regulation or "biddy" games. The court is being constructed so that it can be flooded in the winter for ice-skating. The entire area will be intensively lighted so that basketball games and ice-skating sessions can be held at night. Adjacent to Terrace Avenue is a stairway from Liberty Avenue. It is proposed that the space containing the stairway be renovated and landscaped and thus become an extension of the Terrace Avenue Park.

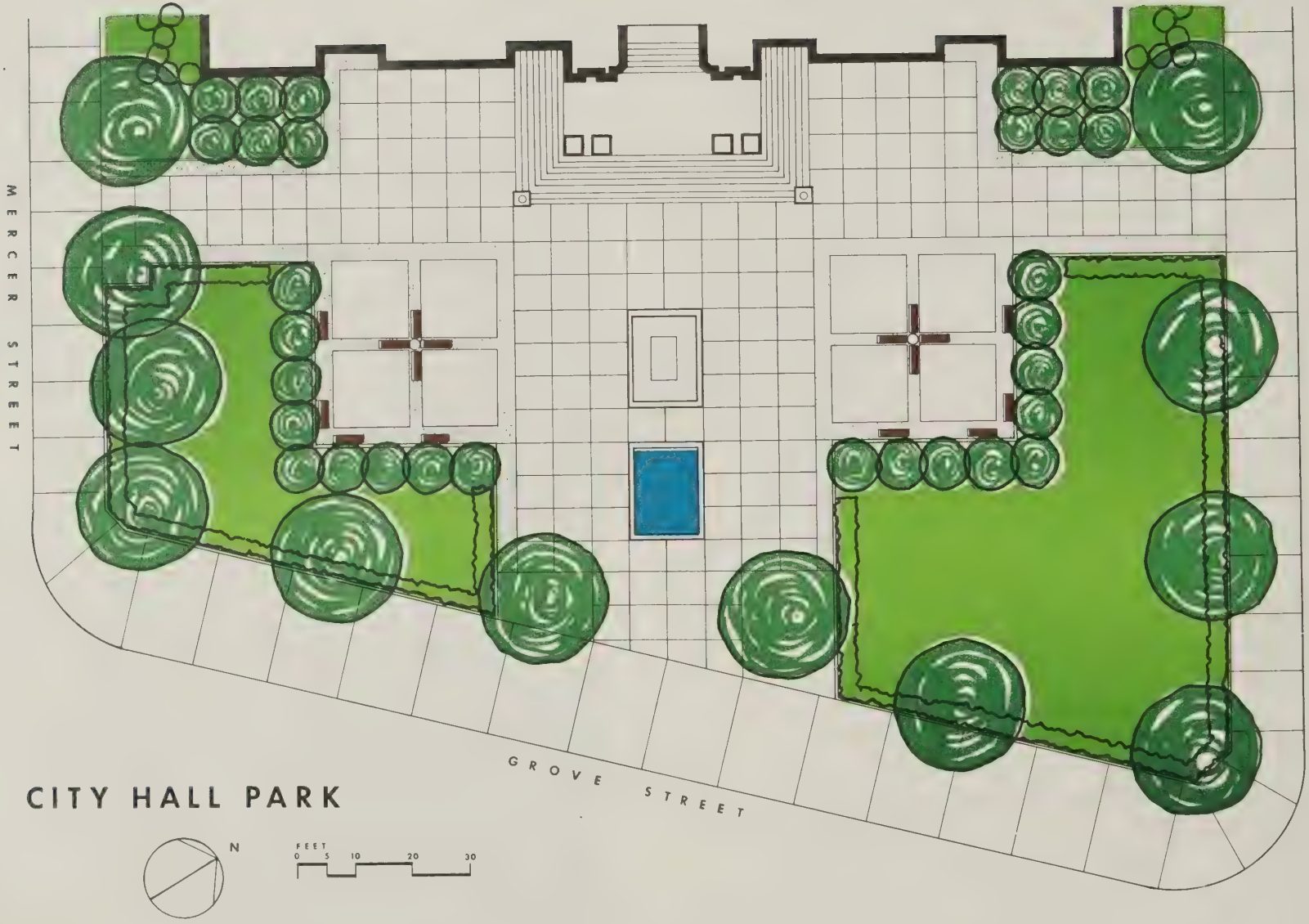
First Street Park. This park is located on the north side of First Street, a short distance south of Brunswick Street. At one time it contained a basketball hoop and swings. At the request of community residents, plans were devised for redevelopment of this site to include a tot-lot, game tables, and because of the large number of senior citizens in the neighborhood, a boccie court. The park will be well-lit so that the residents of the area can participate in a full range of activities after dark.



McGINLEY SQUARE PARK

McGinley Square. This small square is located at the intersection of Bergen Avenue and Montgomery Street. At the request of the merchants around the Square, plans were made for the demolition of the old bus and taxi shelter, which had become primarily a haven for derelicts. Foye Place, the third side of the triangular Square, will be closed and the entire area, including this street, will be redeveloped to create an open plaza. However, the plaza is being constructed in such a way that emergency access to the adjacent businesses will still be possible. The new plaza will include a plexi-glass bus shelter, benches, planters, decorative lighting, and a small decorative fountain. In addition to beautifying the area, the City's Traffic Division is of the opinion that traffic flow in the McGinley Square area will be greatly improved as a result of the proposed development.

City Hall Park. The entire lawn area in front of City Hall is being renovated for use not only by City Hall employees and visitors, but for the use of the neighborhood residents, as well. It will include new pavement, replanting, new benches, and lighting. The overall effect will give City Hall a more formal appearance. At a later date, the building will be cleaned by steam.



CITY HALL PARK

New Parks

Fulton Avenue Park. This park will occupy the .3 acre site on which the Fulton Theatre formerly stood, at the corner of Fulton and Jackson Avenues, in the Greenville section of the City. Because of the high population of young children in this neighborhood, the major feature of the park will be the tot-lot area. In addition to some conventional playground equipment, there will also be some custom-built play equipment constructed from large timber pieces. The park will have a passive area, with benches, game tables, and planting.

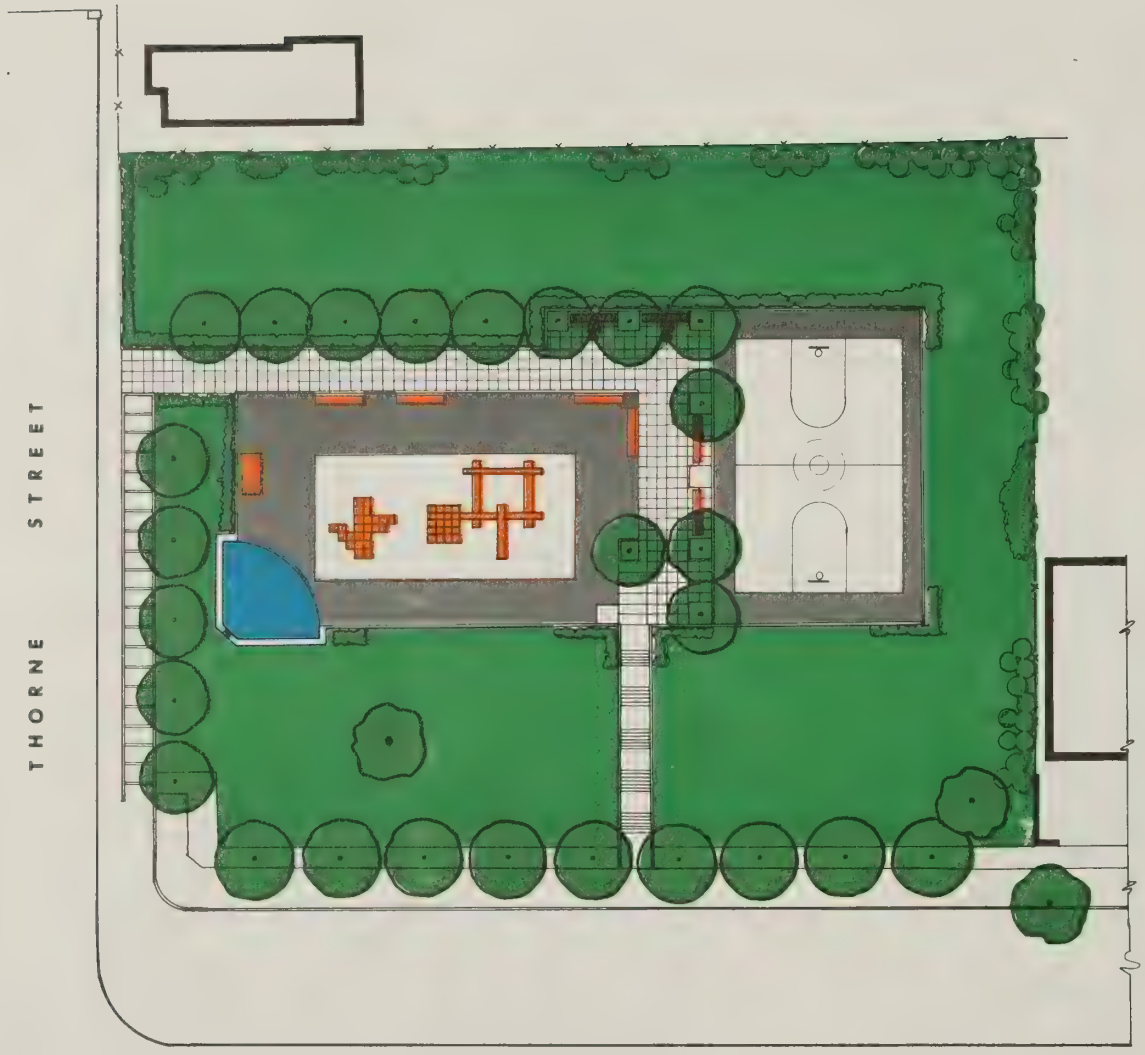
P.S. No. 2 Park. This park, the smallest to be developed under this program, will be built on a vacant lot at the corner of Fourth and Erie Streets, adjacent to P.S. No. 2. This park is being developed for use by both the neighborhood residents and the students at the school. It will contain a tot-lot, spray shower, and passive area, and will be enclosed by a concrete sitting wall.

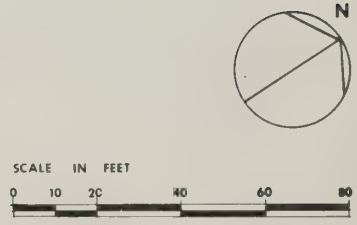
Mercer Street Park. Adjacent to the Division of Parks' Little Theatre, this park is located on a .4 acre tract which runs the block through, from Mercer to Wayne Street, near Brunswick Street. To complement the Little Theatre, a small stage will be constructed for use by the Little Theatre or other groups. The park will also contain a tot-lot, spray-shower, and passive area, and a basketball court with both regulation and biddy baskets.

Johnston Avenue Park. This .9 acre park in the Lafayette section of the City is being constructed through the planning and sponsorship of the Model Cities Agency of the City. It contains a basketball court, active play area for children, and a passive area with benches, planting, and game tables.

Garfield Avenue Park. Also under the sponsorship of the Model Cities Agency, this park is being developed to meet the needs of the teenagers in the area. A small passive area will be included, but the major feature is an extensive hard-surfaced area which can be used for either basketball or tennis.

TERRACE AVENUE PARK





urban renewal parks

The Jersey City Redevelopment Agency is the local authority responsible for all urban renewal projects in the City. At present there are three major, predominantly residential, urban renewal projects under various stages of construction which will have a significant amount of open space and recreation areas.

The Henderson Street Urban Renewal Project is located between Henderson and Grove Streets and between Second and Ninth Streets. The Redevelopment Agency has set aside two areas for recreation purposes to serve both the new residents and the residents of the adjacent neighborhoods. The entire block between Sixth and Seventh Streets will be made into a permanent ball field, and basketball courts will be installed on a portion of the block between Seventh and Eighth Streets, adjacent to St. Anthony's High School. There will, of course, be open space incorporated into the design of the residential units for the private use of the tenants. Exact locations of the parks and open space in this and other urban renewal projects were determined, to a significant extent, by HUD noise criteria, which prohibits residential structures abutting major traffic arteries or railroads.

Arlington Park Neighborhood Development Project is an urban renewal area in the Bergen-Lafayette section of the city. Again, there are two recreation-open space areas proposed here. The plan calls for an interior mall for use of the residents of the block bounded by Madison, Clinton, and Bramhall Avenues, and Grand Street. The public space will be a small park adjacent to the Harmon Street Pool to be used primarily as a sitting-eating area and will help alleviate congestion at the free lunch program at the Harmon Street facility.

The Montgomery Street Urban Renewal Project, the largest in the City, is currently in the acquisition and demolition stage. The project will surround and include the recreation complex including Old Colony Field and High School Field. Old Colony Field and the Montgomery Street Pool will remain, but High School Field will be relocated to an area at the intersection of Colden and Fremont Streets, and will include two baseball diamonds, a football field, and basketball courts. This area will be 82,000 square feet larger than the present facility.

federal open space grant

Enos F. Jones Memorial Field, named after a local boys' club benefactor, is the former Oakley Oval at Brunswick and Ninth Streets. With local community support, the City of Jersey

City requested the Redevelopment Agency to prepare Federal and State applications and then execute the reconstruction of the park. This was done in two stages. Phase I included a Little League baseball field, a sunken amphitheater, and adventure playground. The 1973 National Little League Eastern Regional Championship Tournament was played on this field. Phase II includes a regulation-size field for football, baseball, and soccer, as well as a community building with toilet facilities, concrete bleachers, dugouts for the Little League Field, benches, and lighting. The total investment, upon completion, will amount to $875,000, of which $675,000 was approved by the Federal Open Space Program and the New Jersey Green Acres grant, and an additional $200,000 in local cash, materials, and services.

improvements to existing parks

Not counting school playgrounds and recreation facilities, the City of Jersey City has over forty parks and playgrounds, ranging in size from over ten acres to a tenth of an acre. As park programming and maintenance funds and park staff have diminished over the past few years, so has the quality of the parks. Maintenance is, in many if not most cases, almost mythical. So is police protection. As a result the parks are litter-strewn and vandalized. In many instances, play equipment is beyond repair. The majority of the basketball hoops have no nets. Fences are broken. Play fields are so littered with metal and glass fragments that they are not safe. Tree and lawn maintenance is negligible. Much of the park lighting is either inadequate or inoperable. And there are very few local residents who would even consider entering a park at night.

Before any of the new parks proposed elsewhere in this plan can or should be constructed, both the municipal council and the citizens of the City must be convinced and reassured that the existing parks and playgrounds can be adequately maintained and the deplorable conditions corrected. Further, extensive efforts must be made to renovate and rehabilitate

existing facilities before any substantial amount of new funds can be expended on acquisition and development of new parks.

Several parks -- including Pershing Field and Leonard Gordon Park -- are recommended for "total rehabilitation." This means that the parks will be kept basically as they are, where facilities and activity areas are involved, but that they will be repaired and modernized. This includes new benches, repair of play equipment, or installation of new equipment, re-seeding and replanting, where necessary. A major feature in all parks will be the installation of high intensity sodium vapor lights, which will extend the use-hours of parks and will provide a major deterrent to criminal activity.

Some of the parks are in reasonably good condition, and will require only cosmetic treatment. Others require basic repairs. They all require diligent maintenance. This section of the plan presents recommended improvements for the upgrading of the existing City parks and playgrounds.

HUDSON CITY

Sgt. Anthony Playground (Palisades Avenue). All of the existing pavement should be removed, and when repaved, substantial areas should be left open for grass and tree planting. Sitting walls should be installed, and the drinking fountain and spray shower repaired.

Leonard Gordon Park (Kennedy Boulevard). A total rehabilitation of this park is recommended. More trees should be planted, and sitting walls should be constructed.

Pershing Field (Summit Avenue). This park is also recommended for total rehabilitation. It is also recommended that a large, permanent swimming pool be constructed on the site where the ice-skating rink is located, and that it be so constructed as to allow the ice-rink to cover the pool during the winter. Alternatively, a plastic inflatable dome can be placed over the present rink to extend the skating seasons.

Riverview (Fiske) Park (Palisades Avenue). See "New Park Proposals."

Terrace Avenue Playground (Terrace Avenue). This park is being expanded and redesigned under the "Legacy of Parks" program. Plans and discussion of this project appear elsewhere in this report.

Tumulty Park (Foot of Ogden Avenue). It is recommended that this park be developed as a tot-lot, with a large "City-walls" type mural to be painted on the wall of the adjacent building. Minor repairs, such as the repair of the drinking fountain, should be made, and the entire park design should take advantage of the view of the New York skyline.

JOURNAL SQUARE

Veterans' Memorial Triangle (Newark Avenue at Kennedy Boulevard). The portable benches should be removed and replaced with combination planter-benches.

LaPonte Memorial Playground (Dekalb Avenue west of Garrison). Because of the large adult population in the Journal Square area, it is recommended that this park be redesigned with emphasis on passive recreation. As a part of the redesign, benches and new drinking fountains should be installed and trees planted.

MARION

Boyd McGuiness Memorial Park (Duncan Avenue and Kennedy Boulevard). This is one of the better-maintained small sitting parks in the City. This plan recommends removal of all fences, replanting of grass and shrubbery, and removal of benches along the Boulevard, to be replace with a sitting wall.

Brett Triangle (Pavonia and Tonnele Avenues). This mundane concrete triangle has recently been remodeled through general funds. Old benches were replaced by modern permanent ones, and a small landscaped area was provided.

Marion Playground and Pool (Pavonia and West Side Avenues). This park is divided into two parts, bisected by Pavonia Avenue. The north side contains a swimming pool, and the Plan recommends elimination of movable benches and replacement with a permanent type. The other section of the park is a "Legacy of Parks" project; plans and specifications are found in that section of the Plan.

DOWNTOWN

Terriago Park (Newark Avenue at 7th Street). This park was recently developed at the request of, and with the cooperation of, the neighborhood residents. As a city contribution, it is recommended that peripheral areas of blacktop be removed for the planting of trees and flowers.

Maluso Park (Colden and Bates Streets). This park has deteriorated into basically nothing more than a vacant, rubble-strewn lot. Because of the nature ot the neighborhood -- demolished and boarded up residential buildings, marginal factories and warehouses -- and because of the park's complete deterioration, it is recommended that this park be abandoned for the present, and the large amount of funds necessary to bring this park into functional form be used in other parks more suitably located to serve neighborhood needs.

SIXTEENTH STREET
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SIXTEENTH STREET PARK
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Paulus Hook Park (Grand and Washington Streets). This is a quiet passive park which requires very little treatment. It is recommended that all fences be removed and that grass areas be replanted. Fences should be replaced with hedges, and the fourth section of the park restored as soon as possible.

Sixteenth Street Park (16th and Erie Streets). This park will be totally redesigned to make it more responsive to neighborhood needs. This park is the only downtown park north of the Holland Tunnel plaza and approaches. Consequently, to get to any other park, residents of the area must cross two major thoroughfares. The majority of the area residents live in the Holland Gardens project, and the 16th Street Park is the only public open space available to them. The park is presently little more than a barren paved area. The design proposal would renovate this project so that it would include facilities for all age groups, such as a basketball court, adult sitting area, and children's play area.

Van Vorst Park (Montgomery Street and Jersey Avenue). One of the most formal of Jersey City's parks, Van Vorst is in need of basic cosmetic treatment. Bare patches of earth need reseeding, all fences should be removed and replaced with hedges, permanent benches should be installed, and antiquated play equipment should be replaced. It is probable that in the near future, a brownstone revival movement in Jersey City will gain momentum, and Van Vorst Park will be a logical focus of such a movement.

Mary Benson Park (Newark Avenue and Merseles Street). The existing basketball courts have been removed to allow for expansion of the outfield of the Little League baseball field. New basketball courts have been constructed.

Hamilton Park (Pavonia and Jersey Avenues). Hamilton Park is another residential square, also in need of basic upgrading and maintenance. All interior fences, except those around children's play areas should be removed, and swings should be put up. Fences around the basketball courts are in need of repair. Blacktop paving around the pavillion should be removed, and all barren ground areas should be reseeded.

First Street Playground (1st Street, near Brunswick). This is a "Legacy of Parks" project and is covered in that section of this plan.

Fitzgerald Holata Park (Grove Street and Newark Avenue). This is a new park built by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and given to the City. It also serves as the main entrance to the Grove Street Station of the PATH system. It is frequently in dire need of maintenance, a City responsibility.

Bright Street Playground (Between Barrow and Grove Streets). This plot will, for the

foreseeable future, continue to be used as a site for a temporary school structure.

BERGEN

Triangle (Summit and Fairmount Avenues). This small triangle which is to be eventually realigned under a traffic improvement program, has been given a temporary facelift through the installation of two combination planter-benches. This minor treatment was done through general funds.

Arlington Park (Grand Street and Arlington Avenue). A nicely-shaded and sloping park, this one needs basic upkeep treatment: a drinking fountain, replanting of grass areas, and repair or replacement of toilet facilities.

Virginia Avenue Playground (west of Jackson Avenue). A major amount of the blacktop area should be removed and replaced with a landscaped sitting area with concrete game and card tables. Drinking fountains should be replaced.

Lt. Grover Memorial Park (Kennedy Boulevard and Broadman Parkway). A small, shaded sitting area, this park should have grass and trees replanted. The fence around the monument should be removed and a sitting wall should be built along Kennedy Boulevard.

Harmon Street Pool (Harmon Street near Grand Street). This pool is located within the Arlington Park Urban Renewal Area. The Jersey City Redevelopment Agency plans to provide a small park adjacent to the pool facility.

LAFAYETTE

Esposito Park (Dupont Street, east of Cornelison). This is another park which is totally deteriorated. It is a small, passive park in an area where active recreation facilities are greatly needed. This plan recommends abandonment, because the space is too small to be suitably converted to active uses, and so that maintenance and manpower efforts can be diverted to neighboring park facilities.

Lafayette Park (Van Horne, between Lafayette and Maple). Basic maintenance treatment is recommended, including grass reseeding, installation of permanent benches and a water fountain.

Pope Triangle (Baldwin and Summit Avenues). Planter-benches are recommended.

GREENVILLE

Martiniuk Park (Pamrapo Avenue and Old Bergen Road). A quiet, passive park, Martiniuk

needs reseeding, a new drinking fountain, and new, permanent-type benches. Dead trees should be removed.

Columbia Park (Kennedy Boulevard between Bartholdi and Winfield Avenues). Grass areas are to be reseeded. New benches are to be installed and sitting walls installed along both Kennedy Boulevard and Old Bergen Road. The drinking fountain should be replaced, and an area should be reserved for basketball.

Skinner Memorial Park (Randolph and Wilkinson). All fences should be removed, with trees and shrubbery planted. Benches and a water fountain should be installed.

Claremont Avenue Playground (Claremont and Arlington Avenues). A substantial amount of the pavement should be removed, with trees and shrubbery planted. Benches, a new water fountain, and new play equipment should be installed. Fences must be repaired.

Bayside Park (Garfield Avenue). Bayside is one of the largest of the City's parks, one of the most pleasant, and one of the most under-utilized. Major recommendations for this park are a combination ice-rink and swimming pool, and the repaving of basketball and tennis courts. Fences around the courts must be repaired. The drainage system must be corrected to check soil erosion. Grass areas must be maintained. Concrete areas such as walls and bleachers must be repaired.

Audubon Park (Kennedy Boulevard at Audubon Avenue). All benches should be replaced with permanent benches, and a sitting wall along the Boulevard should be constructed. A tot-lot should be developed in one section of the park, probably where the present handball courts are located.

Country Village Park (foot of Sycamore Road). All basketball and tennis courts must be repaired, and the lines repainted. Fences should be removed, and trees and shrubs planted along the curbline and between the various activity areas.

Woodlawn Hue Playground (Woodlawn and Linden Avenues). A tree-planting program is recommended. Basketball courts are in need of repair.

Roosevelt Stadium and Grounds (Route 440). The stadium and park are much underutilized. A definite program of activities should be scheduled possibly through the Jersey City AWAKE program and the Stadium Commission to more fully utilize the stadium's potential; many of these activities can be revenue producing. The extensive grounds around the stadium should be maintained and furnished with picnic tables and children's play equipment. In the future, it may be possible to expand the park through landfill in Newark Bay along Route 440.

Ferris Triangle (Old Bergen Road and Rose Avenue). This park has been recently improved. It was left largely as an open space, since it is used as a ball-playing area by neighborhood children, and a passive landscaped sitting area was added near the intersection.

proposals for new parks and recreation policies

Because of the heavily urbanized nature of Jersey City, there are no longer large tracts of land available for city-wide development as municipal park and recreation areas. However, parks, recreation, and open space are a part of the business and responsibility of the City government. The City must look with a new and special concern at one of its most vital resources; land. As the demand for adequate recreation and open space increases and land becomes more scarce, the pressure to deal adequately with this problem will mount. Inevitably, recreation and open space will require a bigger slice of public expenditure. Failure to recognize this fact will be costly, as the price of land rises steadily. One of the key tests of local government will be whether it has the leadership, the vision, and the plain common sense to attack Jersey City's open space crisis before it becomes too late.

The purpose of this plan is to provide the local government with a pattern to start the attack on this crisis. Even if all of the City's recreation facilities were in perfect condition -- which they most definitely are not -- they would still not serve this city's population. The City must act when and where it can to increase its open space supply.

The section of the Plan that follows proposes several new park, recreation, or open space facilities, as well as policy changes. These are important for several reasons. First, they will, if implemented, represent a physical addition to the City's open space supply. Second, they can serve as prototypes for other parks to be developed in the future throughout the City. Finally, they represent a method for eliminating vacant non-conforming uses or blighted areas in general.

PROPOSAL: Renovation of Van Vorst Park
LOCATION: Montgomery Street and Jersey Avenue
FACILITIES: Active and Passive Recreation
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1-5 Years

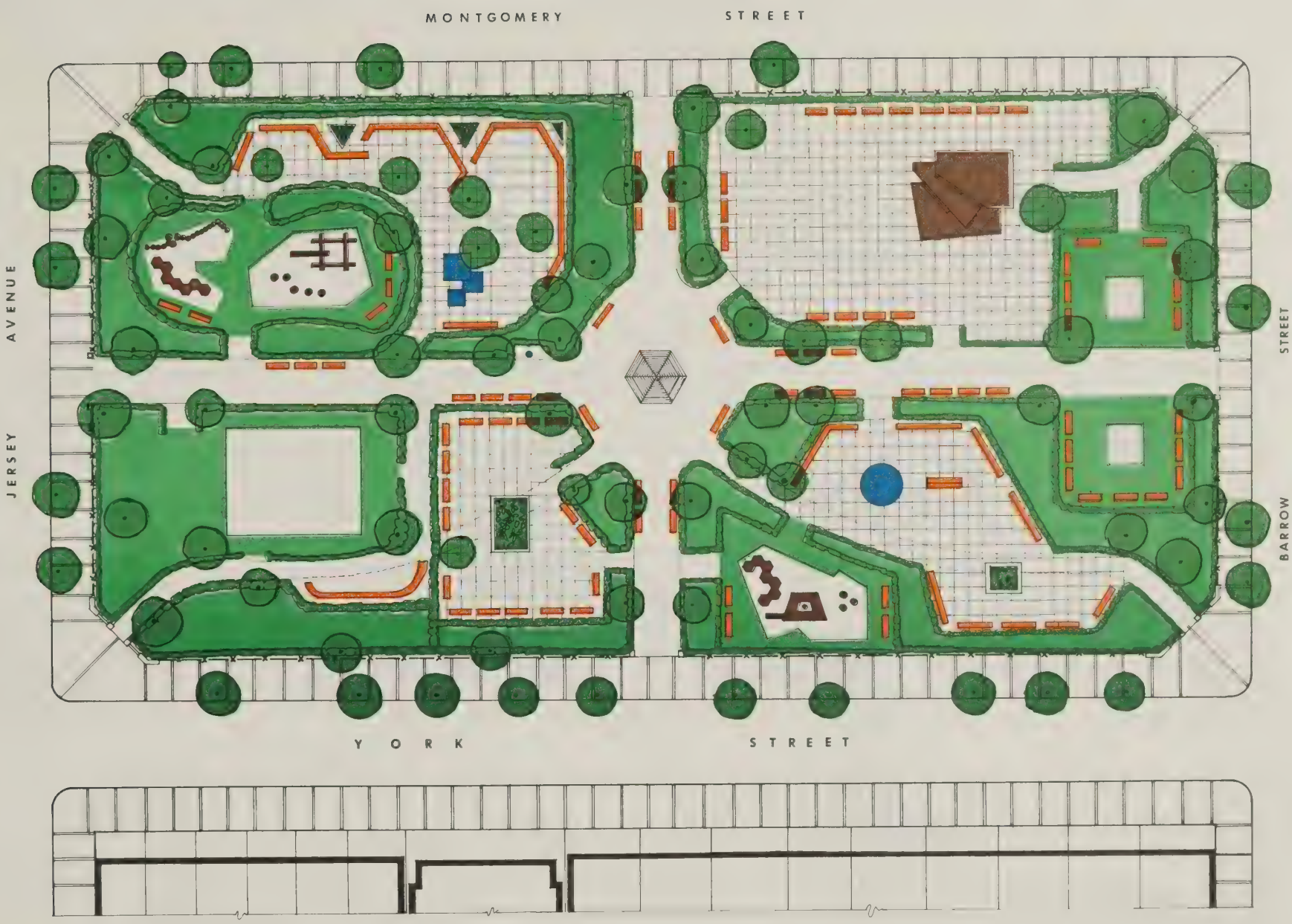
The renovation of Van Vorst Park is potentially one of the most important park renovations in the city because it can be a major catalyst in redevelopment of the historic brownstone area in downtown Jersey City.

Van Vorst Park is an urban park in the truest sense, as it has been since the land was donated for the public use by the Van Vorst family. It is a quiet, formal square surrounded on all sides by that most urban of housing forms -- the brownstone townhouse. The brownstones are remnants of another era, still surviving, which have been adapted to the emerging socio-economic patterns in downtown by conversion from one-family homes to apartment buildings. Now these buildings are on the threshold of still another change: a major effort at renovation, restoration, and preservation of these buildings, which will hopefully attract a stabilized, family-oriented middle class population back into this area.

This, then, is the context within which Van Vorst Park must be renovated. Conceptually, Van Vorst Park should be an extension of the human perception that a total city environment limits. It should fulfill and allow for such functions as the perception of space and nature and man's relation to it. It should encourage open pedestrian flows, as opposed to the grid limitations of the surrounding city. It must provide spaces for both personal activities (walking, thinking) and group acitivities (sports, games). The park's man-made structures must be solid, yet abstract enough for one's creative and personal activities. The park must function as a meeting place, yet a place for solitude. It must be open enough for a feeling of safety, yet closed enough to escape the surrounding environment.

The sound elements for a good park are greenery, water, open spaces, natural spaces, spaces for groups and individuals, materials and greenery that basically maintain themselves, places for the animals of the city (birds, squirrels) and play areas that are tactile and creative (sand hills, pits, natural slides, ropes) as opposed to rigid and confining (swings, seesaws).

The proposed design for Van Vorst Park incorporates these criteria, yet preserves the primary feature of the park: the splendid shade-tree covering. It is designed to provide a variety of activities, spaces, and experiences. The goal is to provide an attractive, functional, and exciting urban square for all age groups.



PROPOSED REDESIGN - VAN VORST PARK

PROPOSAL: "Operation Main Street"
LOCATIONS: West Side and Central Avenues
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1-2 Years

"Operation Main Street" is a classic example of cooperation between the public and private sectors of the city's population to achieve a mutual goal: stabilization and improvement of major secondary shopping areas in the city. Central Avenue and West Side Avenue are the two strongest secondary shopping districts in Jersey City. In recent years, however, business in these areas has declined as many shoppers have been attracted by the outlying shopping centers with, among other attractions, acres of free parking. But these shopping areas in the city still have much to offer: small, quality stores and shops, friendly merchants, and the general neighborhood ambiance that is totally lacking in the large, crowded, impersonal shopping centers.

The Operation Main Street Program is designed to provide a stimulus in order to halt the decline of the secondary areas. But a primary requirement for city action is a strong and cooperative merchant's association, and in order for mutual efforts to succeed, merchant's association support and participation must be active and constant. Only then will any long-range benefits accrue.

Major features of the program include:

(1) City-sponsored permanent or temporary street closings to create a mall effect, or, as an alternative, significant traffic diversion.
(2) Provision of ample and convenient off-street parking.
(3) Improved street lighting, where necessary.
(4) Street beautification, including pavement changes, plantings, street furniture.
(5) Cooperative efforts among the merchants to improve their collective image by maintenance, remodelling, and sign control.
(6) Concerted effort to keep shopping area litter free.

PERATION MAIN STREET : CENTRAL AVENUE TREATMENT

PROPOSAL: Bergen Avenue Greenway
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1 Year

Trees are a vital part of a city. They give people a contact with nature, establish a relationship with primitive needs, and soften the hard, unyielding surfaces of urban construction with the green of leaves, texture, and shadow. In addition, they perform a definite physiological function in removing carbon dioxide from the air and replacing it with oxygen.

Street trees and trees on private property may not be a substitute for parks, but they contribute greatly toward making the urban environment more pleasant. The planting of new trees and the preservation of existing trees are thus important municipal functions.

The City should consider the passage of an ordinance which provides for the preservation of trees on new building lots where the trees do not interfere with proposed improvements, and at the same time should aid and advise developers in the techniques of tree preservation.

As a pilot program in tree planting on the city streets, this plan proposes a "greening" treatment of Bergen Avenue, from Fairmount Avenue to Journal Square. Bergen is one of the city's busiest pedestrian shopping streets. Potentially, however, it can become an exciting and pleasing visual experience through the concept of street landscaping. Trees would be regularly spaced along both sides of the Avenue, and would open out onto the occasional existing open spaces of McGinley Square Park, the two church cemeteries, Martin Luther King, Jr. School, and the proposed Journal Square Mall. In addition, the parking in Bergen Square would be eliminated, and the four quadrants landscaped. More study of this aspect of the tree planting program is necessary but the existence of the municipal garage in Bergen is a first positive step.

In addition, the city forester is currently preparing a city-wide "tree master plan." Based on a tree census and technical maps, this plan will show where new plantings are most needed, specify steps to protect existing trees, and will suggest other long-range tree and landscape programs for the city.

PROPOSAL FOR BERGEN AVE. FAIRMOUNT AVE. TO JOURNAL SQUARE

SCALE IN FEET
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PROPOSAL: Redevelopment of Grand Street
LOCATION: Henderson Street to New Jersey Turnpike Overpass
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: Indefinite

Grand Street is what is referred to, in planning jargon, as a "city edge." That is to say, Grand Street is a definite dividing line between two distinctive areas of the city -- particularly west of Henderson Street, where, to the north, is the old traditional brownstone area of the city and to the south is the harsh remnant of Jersey City's transportation and industrial heritage. The transition from one area to the other is quite abrupt, and the dividing line is Grand Street, which, almost everyone will agree, is anything but "grand."

This street is on the verge of becoming an even more distinctive city edge. In the spring of 1973, the city revealed its idea of the revival of the New York Bay waterfront in a multi-hundred million dollar concept entitled "Liberty Harbor." This scheme would, in effect, construct an entire new town on 3,000 acres of idle waterfront land, the northern edge of which would be Grand Street. Thus, Grand Street becomes even more important in terms of a transition street between the fresh and contemporary residential area of Liberty Harbor and the traditional and historic area of "Paulus Hook."

One of the professed, and necessary, goals of Liberty Harbor is to relate to the remainder of the city in which it is located. Grand Street is the most accessible point from which to pass from the developed part of the city, and it of necessity becomes a transitional street -- its goal being to foster a relationship between the two distinctive neighborhoods.

Basically, the vacant and run-down industrial and commercial structures which line both sides of Grand Street will be removed, and replaced with new housing, neighborhood commercial, and open space development. Before Grand Street can be refined, however, two things must happen. First, the final plans for waterfront residential development must be presented, and, second, the beginnings of a downtown revival movement must take place. At that point, once the nature of the developments become apparent, then Grand Street can be redesigned to serve this transitional function.

The open space development along Grand Street becomes critical especially in view of HUD's noise criteria which does not permit Federally-funded residential construction near a major traffic artery.

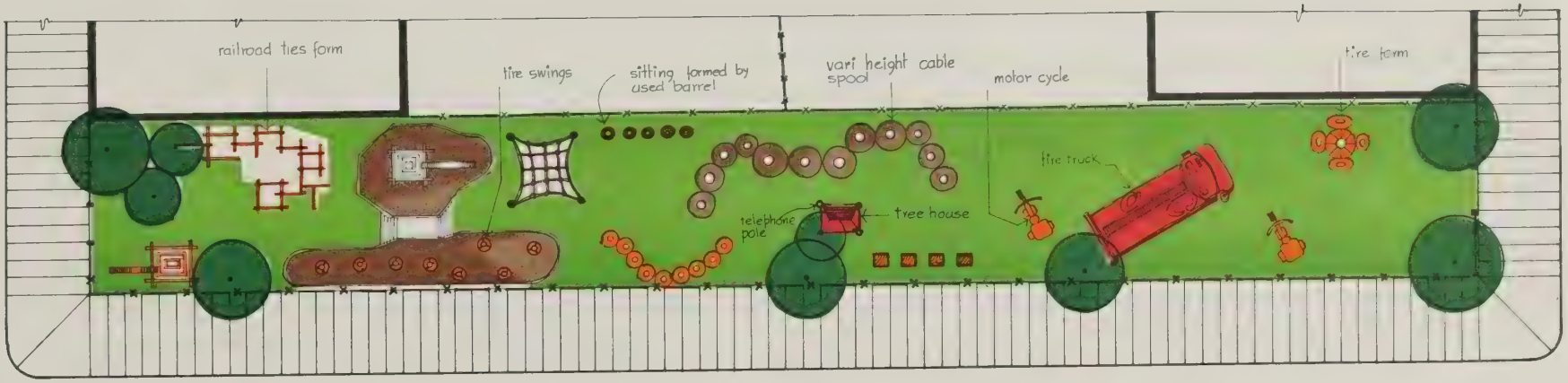
GRAND STREET PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL: Adventure Playground
LOCATION: Hart Street, between Kearny and Ege Avenues
FACILITIES: Playlot for Children
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1 Year

In recent years there has been a trend toward "reality" in the design of play equipment: rockets, horses, fish, submarines and other "real" objects. They are examples of equipment created by, and mainly for, adults who seem to have need of naming or labelling things before they feel at ease. But children can, and do, create their own imaginary world from simpler objects: old boards and bricks, mounds of dirt, tires, empty boxes. Those objects, most free of form, allow children to place their own meaning on them. Thus, a cardboard box can become a boat, automobile, house, rocket ship, or anything a child wants it to be. Basic elements which repel an adult -- water, dirt, junk, can form a whole universe for a curious child.

Drive down any street in many Jersey City neighborhoods, and you will see children contentedly playing in rubble-strewn lots. But in London and New York, among other cities, a more formalized concept of an "adventure playground" has been implemented. The "adventure" comes from building with salvage; the playground is filled with a selection of junk -- cable spools, old tires, boards, bricks -- that is safe as well as fun to play with. The lot is cleared, and a safe but interesting bed is placed on the lot, using wood chips or clean gravel. The playground presents a variety of challenges, from things young children can master to things that require the skill and agility of older children. It gets dual usage: during the day it is used by pre-school children, under supervision, and after school by older children.

The location proposed for the experimental adventure playgrounds is where there is a very high percentage of young children: Lafayette. It is in neighborhoods where there is a great shortage of park and playground space for young and pre-adolescent children. It is on City-owned properties, so that land acquisition expense is not a factor. "Adventure" equipment can probably be picked up free of charge from junk yards and contractors. A major feature would be the placement of an old city fire engine on the lot as a major play element. The primary City expense would be for surfacing, lighting, and fencing; if a concentrated effort was made, even much of this expense might be picked up through donations. Supervision could probably be arranged either privately, through the community, or through the Bureau of Parks.



HART STREET

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ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

PROPOSAL: Waterfront Vest-Pocket Parks
LOCATION: Hudson River, at Marginal Street and Exchange Place
FACILITIES: Promenade for passive recreation
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1 Year

Like many other river cities, Jersey City has traditionally turned its back on its waterfront. But, like the citizens of the other cities, Jersey City residents occasionally manage to find their own waterfront outlets. A visit to the Exchange Place area at noon on a warm day provides an example of this when secretaries, executives, and workers from near-by banks and factories bring their lunches to the Hudson River waterfront. There is a small, city-owned street, seldom shown on any map, called Marginal Street. Created as a WPA project, it is a combination street-bulkhead built as access to a long-abandoned pier at the foot of York Street, stretching between York and Grand Streets.

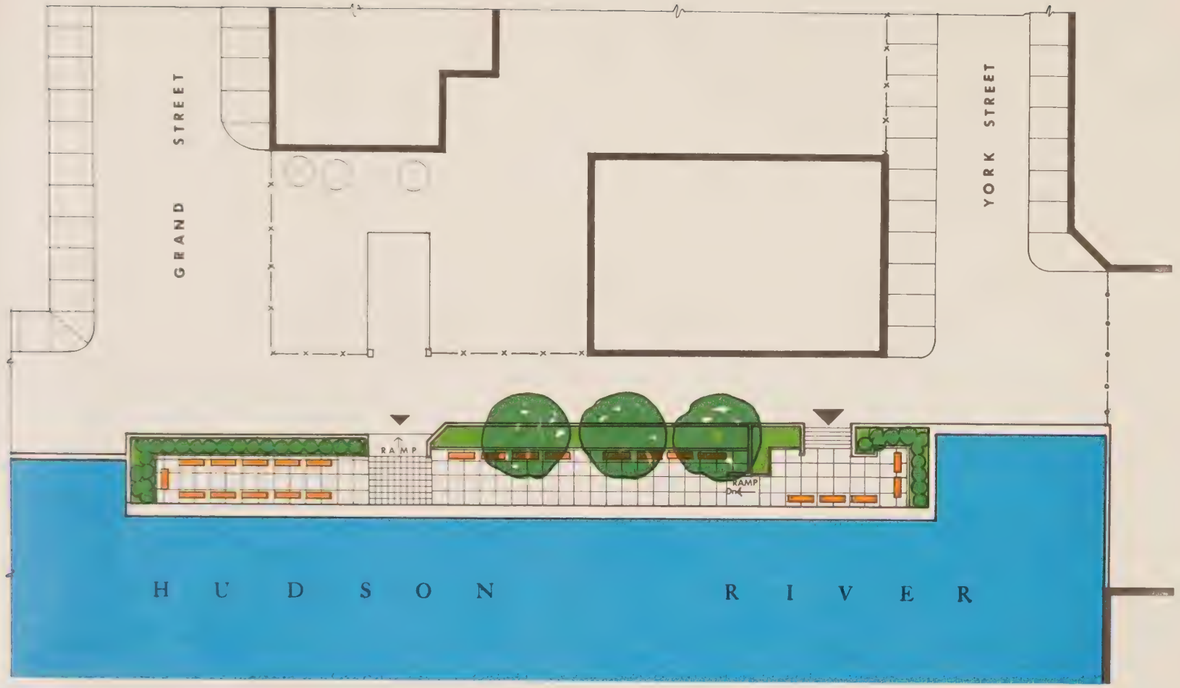
The area can readily, and at minimal expense, be converted into a pedestrian promenade, and still allow room for the access required to the Colgate complex near that location. It is possible that, as a good will gesture, planters, benches, and other street furniture might be contributed by the industries or financial institutions whose employees will derive a major benefit from this park. The plans for it are practical, and can be constructed readily and rapidly.

The park will include a raised walkway along the waterfront for the length of the block. A number of benches will be placed facing the water. Planters will screen the park from the street behind. Accessory tables and waste receptacles will be placed at appropriate intervals. To complement the open air feeling of the space, the City could arrange with the Harborside Terminal management for a large outdoor abstract mural to be painted on the wall of the Harborside pier.

In addition, a small parcel of city-owned land located at the foot of Exchange Place should be developed as a similar facility, except that movable planters and benches should be installed. The City should take prompt action to remove the adjacent dilapidated and structurally unsound pier, so that (1) there will be a view of the water and of Lower Manhattan, and (2) the city-owned parcel will become marketable for eventual housing and luxury office development. At that time, a permanent plaza for guaranteed public access should be incorporated into the design of the project.

This park would serve a work-day population of over 5,000, and a residential population of approximately 20,000. Because of its excellent transportation access, it could be used for occasional neighborhood and city-wide events such as art shows and street fairs.

WATERFRONT PROMENADE



WATERFRONT PROMENADE

TEMPORARY WATERFRONT VEST POCKET PARK

EXCHANGE PLACE

PROPOSAL: Journal Square Mall
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 3-7 Years

Journal Square is the central business district of Jersey City; in addition to the thousands of people who work and shop in the square, tens of thousands more pass through it daily. Since its earliest origins, it has been a major bus/train transfer point. It is the one and only point in the city with which nearly all of its citizens identify.

But, on a realistic and objective basis, Journal Square is, if not downright unattractive, at best a poor excuse for the city's major focal point.

Many major American cities have exciting urban squares as the focal point of their downtown; one of the more famous of these is Cincinnati's Fountain Square, which has recently been renovated. The old square was much like the present Journal Square, with a large local-bus loading area in the center, except that it has a large fountain as its focus. In the renovation, large segments of the square were transformed into a large open plaza with street furniture, textured paying, new buildings, contemporary lighting, and an elevated sidewalk system. The overall effect is spectacular.

Fortunately, a healthy start on reversing the mediocrity of the Journal Square area has been made with the construction of both the Operation Breakthrough housing complex, and the sleek new PATH Transportation Center.

The proposed improvement schemes for Journal Square are designed to reinforce and arract people to this city center. The goals for improvement are threefold:

1. To provide a sense of arrival or entry;
2. To provide a center city landmark;
3. To provide a place where people want to spend time.

The plan proposes the creation of a large out-of-door pedestrian mall on the east side of the square. Upon completion of the PATH center, the largest portion of the square, which is now used for parking and for bus stops, will largely be vacated. In its place there would be built a wide pedestrian area, defined by paving, water, lighting, greenery, and other man-made forms which would create a true urban center for the square. The City will work closely with the Port Authority as well as with the Journal Square Merchants' Association in planning, coordination, and financing. The Mall would cover over an acre, and would extend from Sip Avenue to the PATH center.

JOURNAL SQUARE
J. F. KENNEDY BLVD.
JOURNAL SQUARE PARK
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PROPOSAL: Redevelopment of Riverview (Fiske) Park
LOCATION: Palisades Avenue
FACILITIES: Promenade area, children's play area, boccie court, ball field, wading pool
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1-2 Years

This park is one that is very near to the heart of the neighborhood residents. So near, in fact, that a group of local residents, one of whom is an architect, have made their own suggestions, complete with a model, for the rehabilitation of the park. It is their recommendation, and the City's, that the eastern portion of the park-east of Ogden Avenue-be rebuilt as a pleasant, passive, sitting and walking area: a promenade along the bluff that takes advantage of the magnificent view. The western section of the park-between Ogden and Palisades Avenues-would be bisected by a grassy mall area. To the north would be a ball field. To the south would be a children's play area, a boccie court, and a wading pool. The citizens group recommends a high fence around the entire complex concealed with heavy landscaping so that the park can be closed off at night. They also recommend that at night, when the park is not policed, a watchman with a guard dog be on duty. The park will eventually be tied into a linear park system going throughout the city; that park is described elsewhere in this section.

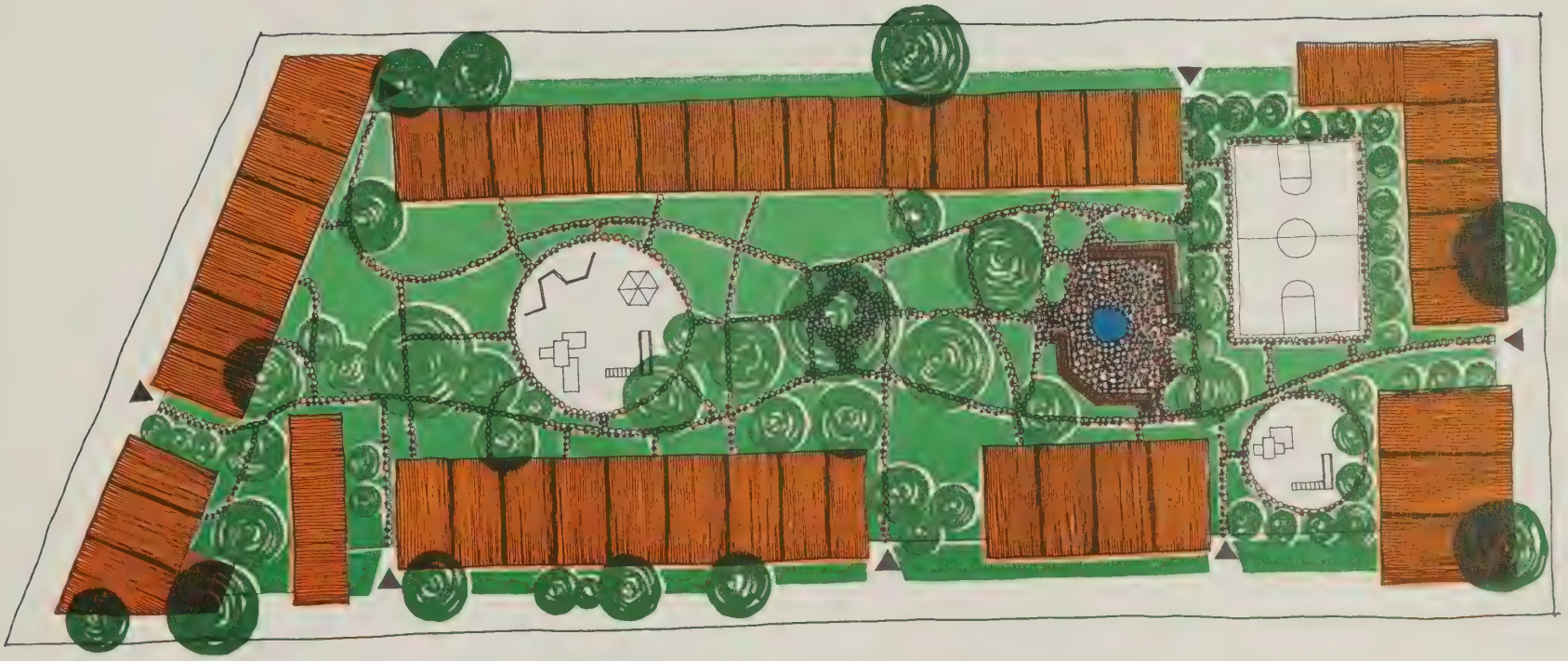
PROPOSAL: Interior Block Parks
LOCATION: Throughout the City
FACILITIES: Active and Passive Recreation Spaces

Because of basic fiscal limitations, the City will never be able to provide the full amount of park and recreation space the residents of Jersey City demand and need. This plan has spoken elsewhere of "found" open spaces: spaces which have existed all along, but whose potential for recreation space has never been realized. Block interiors are another example of "found" open spaces.

There are many neighborhoods throughout the City, particularly in Downtown, where the potential exists for the creation of interior block parks. This must be done on a block that meets certain requirements: (1) The majority of the homes should have resident owners (2) There must be a minimum of non-residential uses on the block (3) There must be a high degree of block spirit and cooperation (4) There must be a point of access to the block interior for upper floor residents.

The principal of the "interior park" is that all of the rear lots of the parcels in the block are pooled into a common open space for the use of all block residents, rather than subdivided into small, often shabby lots. Of course, individual ownership is retained, but the space is opened, landscaped, and developed for use by all the residents. Because it is a space that is neither open or accessible to the general public, it cannot be funded in any part by the City. The city can, and would, however, contribute its advisory services on park design and neighborhood organization. This concept has successfully been achieved on Macdougal Street in New York. The interior of the park has been transformed into a private park for the residents of the block with the aid of the city through funds made available to the Macdougal Street Block Association.

As a graphic example of this type of park, one typical block of downtown Jersey City has arbitrarily been chosen.



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INTERIOR BLOCK PARK

PROPOSAL: West Side Avenue Park
LOCATION: Pavonia, West Side, and Corbin Avenue

This site of approximately three-fourths of an acre is located adjacent to the Marion Pool, and is intended to replace some of the facilities removed from the Marion Playground when a ballfield was constructed under the Legacy of Parks Program. It will also have facilities that were not present at the original playground.

The park, stretching the block through, from West Side to Corbin Avenues, will be divided into functional areas for activities and for age groups. Along West Side Avenue, and adjacent to the pool, will be two regulation-size basketball courts. To the north will be a tot-lot, consisting of a free-form play area and sprinkler-shower. On the Corbin Avenue side, a special sitting area, with game tables, will be set aside for senior citizens. There will also be a boccie court. The entire park will have heavy landscaping and numerous shade trees.

WEST SIDE AVENUE PARK

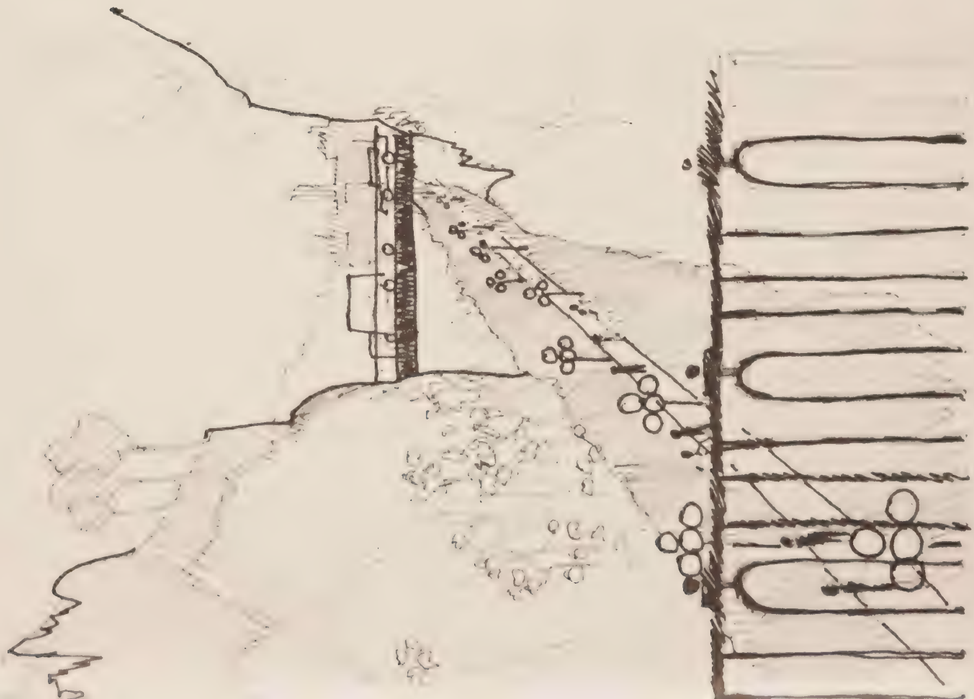
PROPOSAL: Linear Belt Park
LOCATION: Continuous throughout the City
FACILITIES: Walking and Biking trails, tie-in with existing City parks

The concept of a "green belt" around Jersey City seems, at first thought, to be a total contradiction in view of the intensely developed and highly urbanized nature of this City. But with careful planning, it perhaps is not so unrealistic. A magnificent network of open space can be made by conserving, improving, and linking abandoned rights-of-way. The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation reports that hiking, biking, and horseback riding surpass pleasure driving by better than two to one. These activities require relatively narrow open spaces if the routes are long enough, possess enough variety, and are adequately screened from blight.

This plan proposes the construction, in stages, of a linear open space belt, throughout the City, utilizing existing parks, abandoned and some existing railroad rights-of-way, and some existing highway or street rights-of-way. The trail would begin at the northern end of the City at the base of the Palisades Escarpment, with a pedestrian connection to Riverview Park. It would continue along the base of the Palisades through the downtown area of the City; it is this section of the trail which would require the most extensive screening. In the Downtown area it would connect with several of the parks. Most of the remainder of the park is contingent upon the successful redevelopment of the City's waterfront renewal project and Liberty Sate Park, with the resulting abandonment of the rights-of-way of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. The linear belt would connect with both developments, and would follow the railroad right-of-way along the entire length of the waterfront. It would continue to the Jersey City-Bayonne line, then swing west to the Hackensack River and Newark Bay. From that point, it would swing north through the Roosevelt Stadium complex, and follow the shoreline north to Lincoln Park. A branch of the belt would also cut diagonally through the City using the abandoned right-of-way of the Newark and New York Railroad. Any trail system in the Liberty Harbor area would not, of course, conflict with either the plan for Liberty Harbor or the State's plan for rail freight-yard consolidation. Certain portions of the Linear Park would require landfill.

GRASS

PROPOSED LINEAR BELT
GREEN WAY
NORTH BERGEN
SECAUCUS
UNION CITY
WASHINGTON PARK
RIVERVIEW PARK
HOBOKEN
HUDSON RIVER
PASSAIC RIVER
HACKENSACK RIVER
KEARNY
LINCOLN PARK
LIBERTY STATE PARK
ROOSEVELT STADIUM
BAYSIDE PARK
NEWARK BAY
UPPER NEW YORK BAY
BAYONNE
CITY OF JERSEY CITY, N.J.
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR / DIVISION OF PLANNING



PROPOSAL: Restoration of Speer Cemetery
LOCATION: Vroom Street, west of Bergen Avenue
FACILITIES: Park Area for Passive Recreation

The Speer Cemetery (also called the Vroom Street Cemetery) was originally part of a larger area utilized since 1660 for burial purposes. It was located outside the fortified village of Bergen. As the village grew and boundary disputes developed, the plot of land was formally allotted by the City Commissioners in 1764 for use as a burial ground. The majority of the inscriptions are illegible now, due to age and mutilation, but those which are readable date back as far as 1756, and an estimated 53 Civil War veterans are among the buried.

The cemetery once extended to what is now Bergen Avenue, but numerous commercial establishments bought up the land adjacent to Bergen Avenue. In 1951, the uncared for and refuse-ridden burial ground, labelled the "Forgotten Cemetery," was rededicated. Unfortunately, this action brought short-lived changes and the cemetery soon returned to its previous state of disrepair. Since then, subsequent City Administrations have proposed plans for its revitalization. In 1964, it was slated for conversion to a park. In 1970, a less aesthetic and more practical solution called for the conversion of the cemetery to a parking lot. Fortunately, this proposal was never acted upon.

Anyone who has ever wandered through Trinity Churchyard at the head of Manhattan's Wall Street knows how peaceful and tranquil such a spot can be. It is made all the more so by the contrast with the hustle and noises of the surrounding city. This is also true of Speer Cemetery, even in its present awful state of disrepair. Located just off Bergen Avenue, one of the city's busiest and noisiest, the shade and peace and quiet of the cemetery are welcome and inviting.

This plan proposes a conversion of the cemetery to a park whose sole activity will be limited to walking, sitting, and resting. Those tombstones which are broken and cannot be mended will be removed or utilized in the creation of public spaces. The large concentration of tombstones clustered together will be separated from the public path by thick, thorny hedges. The existing path, which winds pleasantly through the plot, will be formalized with a textured path. At several points, the path opens into spacious, grass areas, where benches and sitting areas will be created.

Thus, Speer Cemetery will no longer be the disgrace it presently is, the quiet purpose of the cemetery will be maintained, and the neighborhood will have a pleasant and peaceful retreat.

RESTORATION OF
SPEER CEMETERY

PROPOSAL: Environmental Education Center
LOCATION: Split Rock Reservoir, Morris County
FACILITIES: Swimming Beach or Pool, Boat Dock, Fishing Pier, Overnight Dormitory Area, Recreation and Dining Hall, Supervisor's Cottage, Play Fields, Hiking Trails, Nature Study Center
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1-10 years, with one-day usage from the earliest stages.

The purpose of the Environmental Education Center is to provide the citizens of Jersey City, particularly the youth, with an educational and recreational opportunity not readily available to them because of the highly urbanized nature of their city: the chance to study nature, to fish and swim in clean water, to walk through woods, to sit and enjoy silence, and most of all, to understand the environment and how it works.

The location of the Split Rock reservoir is ideal for this purpose. It is situated in a very sparsely populated area, and is heavily wooded, with elevations ranging from 800 to 1100 feet above mean sea level. There are high elevation swamps in and adjacent to the property, and deer, other game species, and many other mammals are common.* It is less than an hour away from Journal Square, and when I-280 and I-80 are completed the travel time will be further reduced. The State of New Jersey has an undeveloped tract, Forny State Park, bordering the Splitrock property at two points, and it would probably be possible to utilize this property's woodlands in the programming of the Environmental Education Center. At another point, Split Rock is bordered by a camp of the Union Council, Boy Scouts of America.

The concept of a City Park outside the City is uncommon in the East, but not unique. For example, the City of Newark is in the process of developing the property, for a similar purpose, at its Pequannock Reservoir. Many western cities have separate parks in nearby mountain areas for their population.

The project can be phased over a period of years, and possibly some of the work can be done through school students, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and the City's Office of Manpower Planning.

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* The property has a total of 1,661 acres, of which 1,198 acres is water area; there is an additional City-owned tract of 4,375 acres, although it is not attached to the Splitrock property.

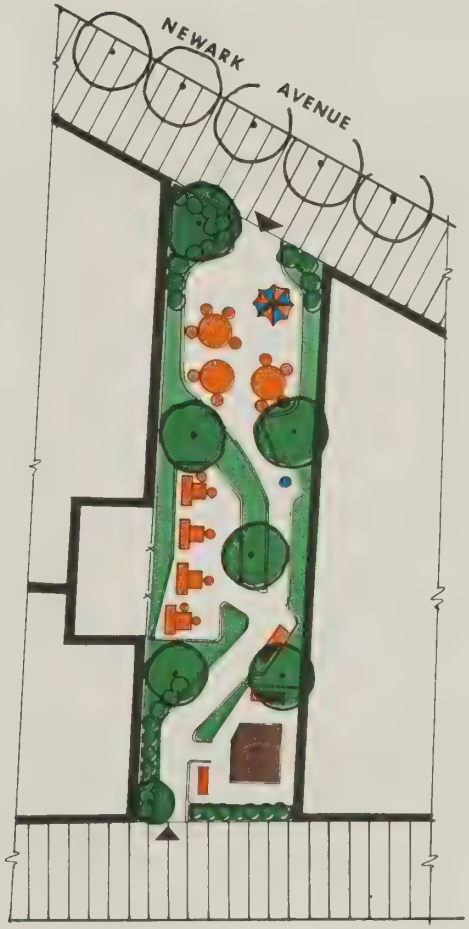
NATURE EDUCATIONAL CENTER : SPLITROCK RESERVOI

PROPOSAL: Vest-Pocket Shoppers' Park
LOCATION: Newark Avenue
FACILITIES: Passive Area for Shoppers and Neighborhood Residents
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1 Year

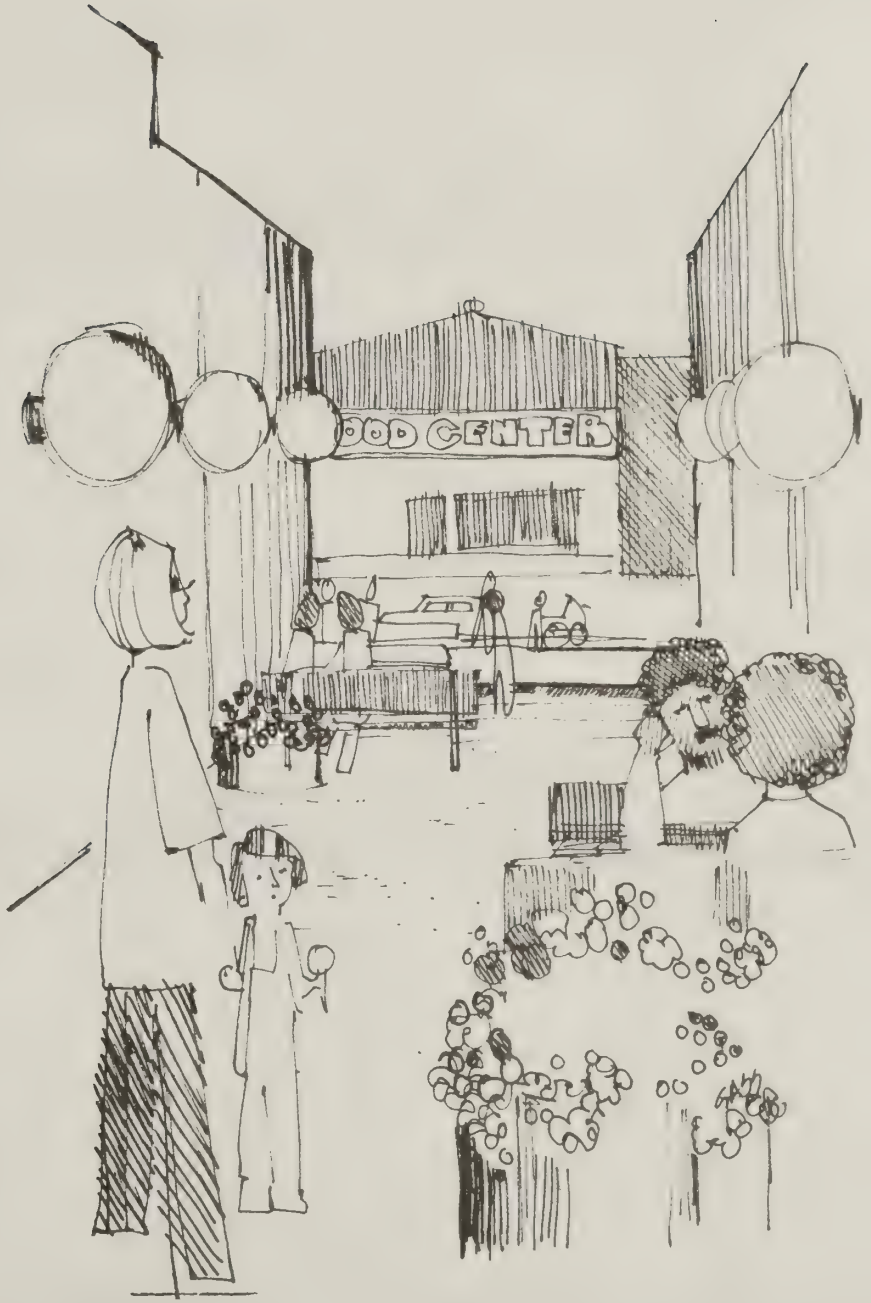
Newark Avenue is one of the city's stronger shopping areas, catering to all of downtown Jersey City with dozens of moderately-priced shops and services. It is a thriving street, and while there is a relatively high proprietary turnover, there are very few vacancies.

The primary shopping district extends along the Avenue from Grove Street to Brunswick Street. In the middle of this shopping strip, at 233 Newark Avenue, the city has foreclosed on a vacant lot which is relatively narrow, and extends through the block to First Street near the intersection of Coles Street.

This plan proposes the creation of a pedestrian vest-pocket park on this property. The park would offer a break in the monotony of shops, but more important, it would offer a welcome and inviting spot for shoppers on the Avenue as well as neighborhood residents. As envisioned, the park would be a passive space, covered with a textured pavement and planted with a number of trees. Attractive maintenance-free street furniture would be installed, as would bright lighting for night use. Efforts would be made to have local merchants and community organizations underwrite park construction costs. A key element of this park is that the tree and paving treatment within the park area would flow on to the Newark Avenue sidewalk. Since a large number of the patrons of the park would be Spanish-speaking, it is possible that the park could be named for someone of their choosing (perhaps the late Roberto Clemente).

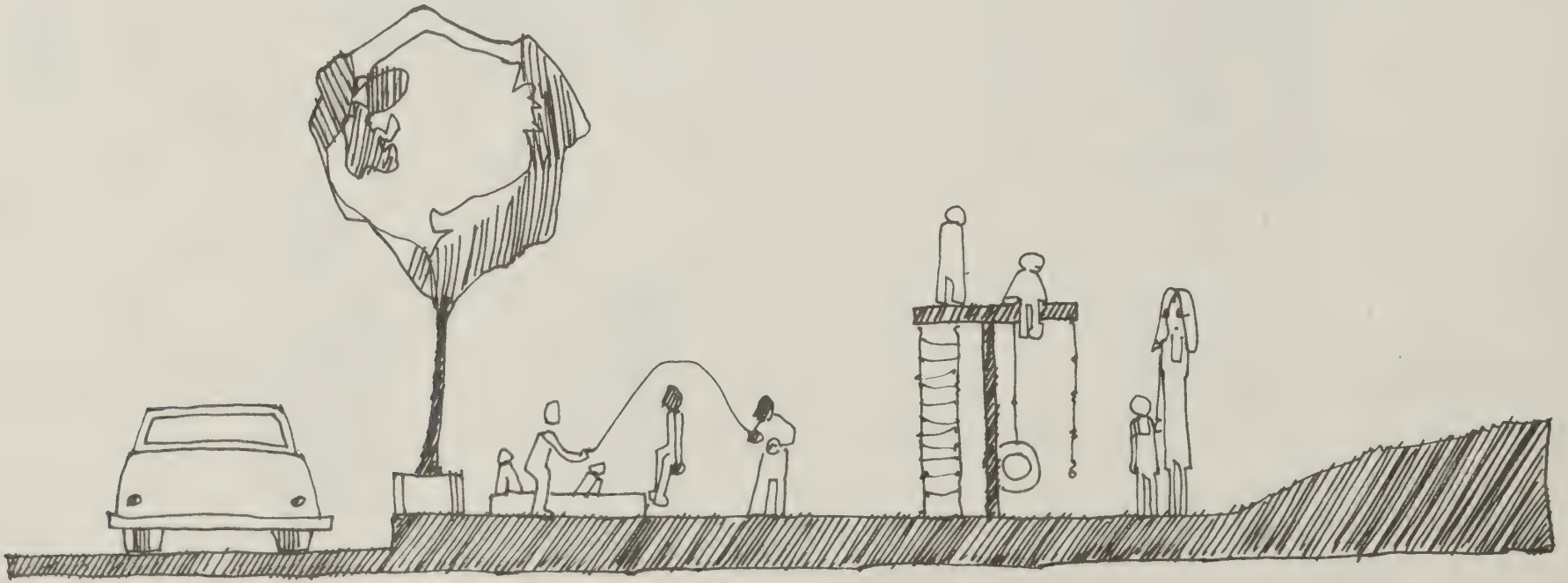


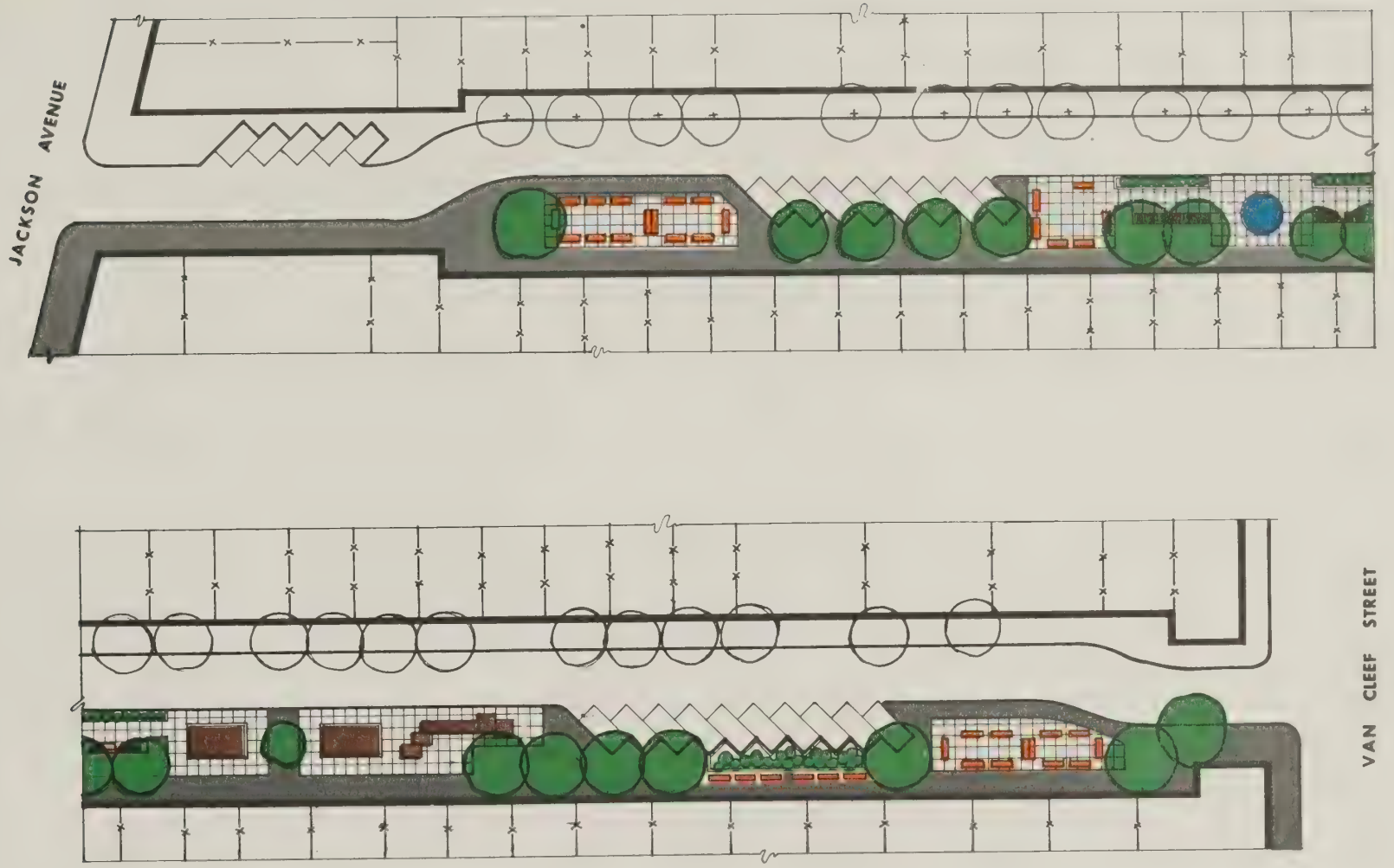
NEWARK AVE. PARK



PROPOSAL: Wegman Park
LOCATION: Wegman Parkway, between Jackson Avenue and Van Cleef Street
FACILITIES: Passive Park area, off-street parking, children's play area

Because there is so little vacant land, the City must seek out "found" open spaces, that is, spaces which have existed all along, but whose potential for public use has not been realized. Such spaces exist throughout every City and Jersey City is no exception. The proposal for Wegman Parkway is a prototypical example of the "found" open space. This street, from Jackson Avenue to Van Cleef Street is a residential street in a neighborhood with a dearth of parks or school recreation facilities. Further, it is a neighborhood with a large population of pre-school and elementary-age children. Traffic flow on Wegman Parkway is two-way, with curbside parking, and a narrow, sparesely-planted median strip down the middle. This plan proposes closing the south side of the street, and creating a linear play area for children the length of the block. Traffic would be made one-way. Off-street angle parking would create a sufficient number of parking spaces to more than off-set the number of spaces lost in the creation of this park. If this park is successful, there are a number of other streets of this type throughout the City where similar "found" open spaces could be created, such as Manhattan Avenue, Stegman Parkway, and others.





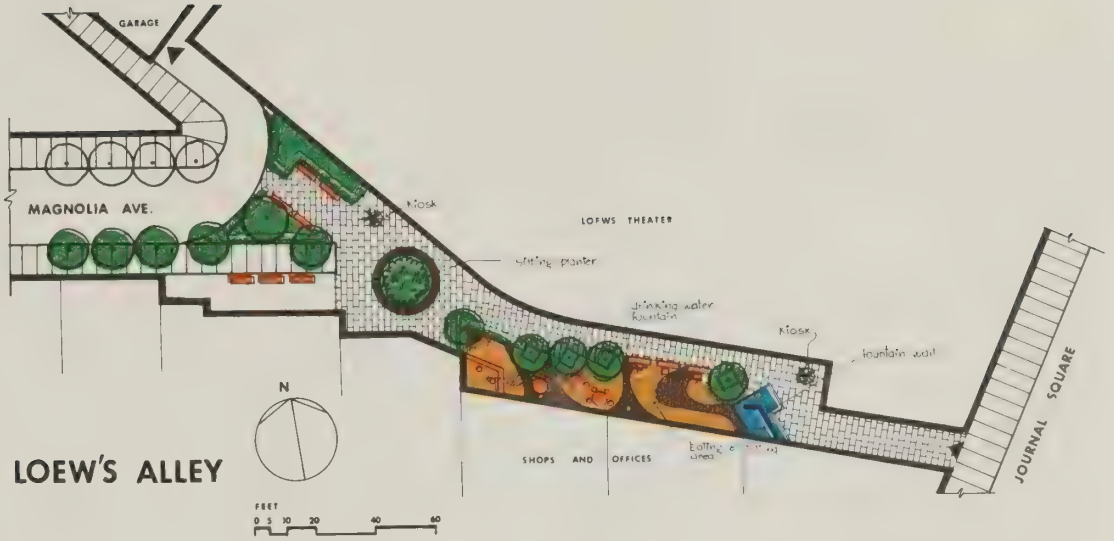
WEGMAN PARKWAY

(A SUGGESTED TREATMENT)

PROPOSAL: Loew's Alley Park
LOCATION: Journal Square
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1 Year

One of the major deficiencies of Journal Square, the city's hub, is the lack of usable pedestrian open space. Of course, there is the enormous space of the square itself, but this is presently being used for parking and bus-loading, and the soon-to-be completed terraces of the PATH Transportation Center, but it will be some distance away from the bulk of the pedestrian movement within the square. There is really no place for the shopper or the office worker to relax, sit and rest for a while, even eat lunch out of doors. More and more cities are developing spaces for just these purposes through public and private funds. One of the most often cited examples is New York's Paley Park, a small "vest-pocket" plot located on East 53rd Street, just off bustling Fifth Avenue. This park, which was privately constructed and endowed, then given to the city, is a quiet, shady lot with tables and chairs, benches, numerous shade trees, and an artificial waterfall. An attendant is present at all times, and light snacks and beverages are sold.

An ideal location at Journal Square exists for development of a similar facility on the west side of Kennedy Boulevard, adjacent to the Loew's Theatre. This passageway to the parking garage at the rear and to Magnolia Avenue, is narrow at its Boulevard opening, but widens out toward the rear. The park, as envisioned, would be a quiet, restful spot tucked in among the shops and office buildings. It would contain benches, tables and chairs for outdoor eating, shade trees, and would be distinguished by a textured pavement and fountain. A concession could be awarded for coffee and pastries. The park could possibly be subsidized by the local merchant's association.


GARAGE
MAGNOLIA AVE.
Kiosk
LOEWS THEATER
sitting planter
drinking water fountain
Kiosk
fountain wall
JOURNAL SQUARE
SHOPS AND OFFICES
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LOEW'S ALLEY

PROPOSAL: Senior Citizens Outdoor Recreation Center
LOCATION: Boonton Reservoir, Morris County
FACILITIES: Open shelter with fireplace, storage shed, walking trails, fishing pier, picnic tables
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1-5 Years

Senior citizens frequently lack the mobility to get out of the City -- to the seashore or to the mountains. Either they have no form of transportation, or they cannot afford the high costs of resort areas. The City's Boonton Reservoir has great recreation potential. This 1,175 acre tract is located primarily in the Township of Parsippany-Troy Hills, Morris County, New Jersey. It is a heavily wooded area surrounding a 775 acre reservoir, and is about a 45 minute drive from Jersey City. The topography is quite gentle, and can easily be adapted for use as a day center for senior citizens. Transportation could be arranged through buses provided by the city or by various senior citizens.

Development of a recreation area solely for senior citizens eliminates several problems: cost of more sophisticated play and recreational equipment, lower cost of maintenance, and the problem of intimidation by other groups. Further, the facilities can be confined to a relatively small area, thus preserving the natural topography to a greater extent. There are many other recreational outlets available to families and young adults; use of the Boonton tract by these same groups would severely limit the number of elderly persons who would go there since they would meet the same problems they have in other areas -- teenagers, running children, and overcrowded conditions which frighten the elderly because of intimidation by more aggressive groups. Many scheduled trips could be made to a semi-protected facility of this type by the frail elderly from nursing homes, boarding homes, and even chronic-care facilities. The City would not be able to enlist the volunteer help it anticipates if this park was accessible to all age groups. (There is also a proposal for an outdoor center for young people at the City's Split Rock Reservoir.)

The Boonton Center could be used for arts and crafts, fishing, picnicking, and could be used by senior citizens independently and/or by the many senior citizens clubs throughout the City. Initial facilities would include a parking area, rest rooms, walking trails, and an open shelter with picnic tables, a fireplace, and locked storage areas. With the City providing proper guidance and supplies, it is possible that some of the initial work, such as planting and landscaping, might be done by the senior citizens themselves, perhaps with the assistance of interested youth.

SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER : BOONTON RESERVOIR

BOONTON
RESERVOIR
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PROPOSAL: Liberty State Park
LOCATION: New York Bay Waterfront
FACILITIES: Marina, Landing, Visitor's Center, Amphitheater, Exhibition Buildings

The State of New Jersey has set forth the following goals in its plan for the development of Liberty Park:

...Transform this degraded landscape into a suitable backdrop for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island -- two of our nation's most revered monuments.

...Create New Jersey's first urban State Park serving the open space and recreation needs of millions of urban residents who are trapped in the surrounding densely -- crowded central cities. The State of New Jersey has made Liberty Park the first priority of the recently-approved Green Acres Bond.

...Serve as the urban "gateway" for New Jersey's metropolitan residents to the recently-established Gateway National Park. Future development of Liberty Park will include a water linkup with the five Gateway park sites located at the entrance to New York Harbor.

...Provide the catalyst and supporting amenity for the revitalization and redevelopment of the Jersey City waterfront as a model urban community.

Even though the park will be a state park serving the entire metropolitan New Jersey region, it will nevertheless serve major open space functions for the city. Primarily, it will open the magnificent harbor-front to the citizens. Of its five miles of Hudson River and New York Bay waterfront, none of it has ever been publicly accessible for recreation purposes. The linear park for the city which is also proposed in this section of the plan will tie into the open space areas of the planned "new town" on the waterfront, and thence directly into Liberty State Park. Thus, there will be many waterfront and water oriented activities and facilities directly available to all the residents of Jersey City, including marinas, an amphitheater, and waterfront esplanades. The park will have a total of over 500 acres.

At present, the State is in the latter stages of land acquisition; construction is expected to commence shortly after all land has been acquired.

PROPOSAL: Restoration of the Hudson County Courthouse Building and Lawn
LOCATION: Newark and Baldwin Avenues
FACILITIES: Functioning Museum, Expanded Court Space, Cultural Center, Formal Park
DEVELOPMENT PERIOD: 1-5 Years

In a city with as few examples of outstanding and monumental architecture as Jersey City, the natural assumption would be that these few examples would be cherished by its citizens. This is apparently not the case, at least for the majority of the citizens and policy-makers in the City and County.

In 1966, the government of Hudson County vacated the Hudson County Courthouse on Newark Avenue and moved into a new, extraordinarily mundane office building next door, complete with its paste-on figure of Justice. At that time, Ada Louise Huxtable, architecture critic for the New York Times, wrote:

"If county officials had deliberately placed the two buildings in their side-by-side position as an object lesson in the decline and fall of American public architecture, they could not have provided a better example. Never has the deterioration of style and standards been so clearly and devastatingly illustrated."

Miss Huxtable went on:

"By the pragmatic measurement of population growth and space needs, the old courthouse is obsolete. No one wants a circa 1910 solid Maine granite building with bronze lanterns and crestings and a four-story interior rotunda of pearl-gray marble, opening through all floors to a central dome, embellished by murals and surrounded by polished Italian green marble Ionic columns.

"Offered the courthouse for one dollar as a substitute for the dingy Victorian structure which has the singular historical asset of having housed the Hague administration, Jersey City Mayor Thomas Whelan replied that the City is in the process of 'liquidating its unnecessary real estate holdings' and 'has no need for a ceremonial city hall.'"[1]

Perhaps the prospect is not quite as dim as Miss Huxtable predicted. The building still stands. There have been some public-minded and vocal citizens who have rallied to have the building preserved. The current wave of nostalgia sweeping the country may have had some positive effects. And the City now has an Administration that is considerably more sensitive to the needs of the City than past ones have been.

[1] New York Times, July 22, 1966

At any rate, it is a building that can, and must, be preserved. It is one of the finest examples of Beaux Arts architecture still in existence, and ranks in magnitude with Grand Central Station. The building has ample potential for once more becoming a beautiful and functional public structure for all the citizens of Jersey City.

It is suggested that this building serve multiple purposes. First, the City of Jersey City has nothing in the way of museum or cultural facilities. Yet a wealth of historical items and knowledge exist in various public and private repositories throughout the City. This building offers a superb permanent home for such a collection.

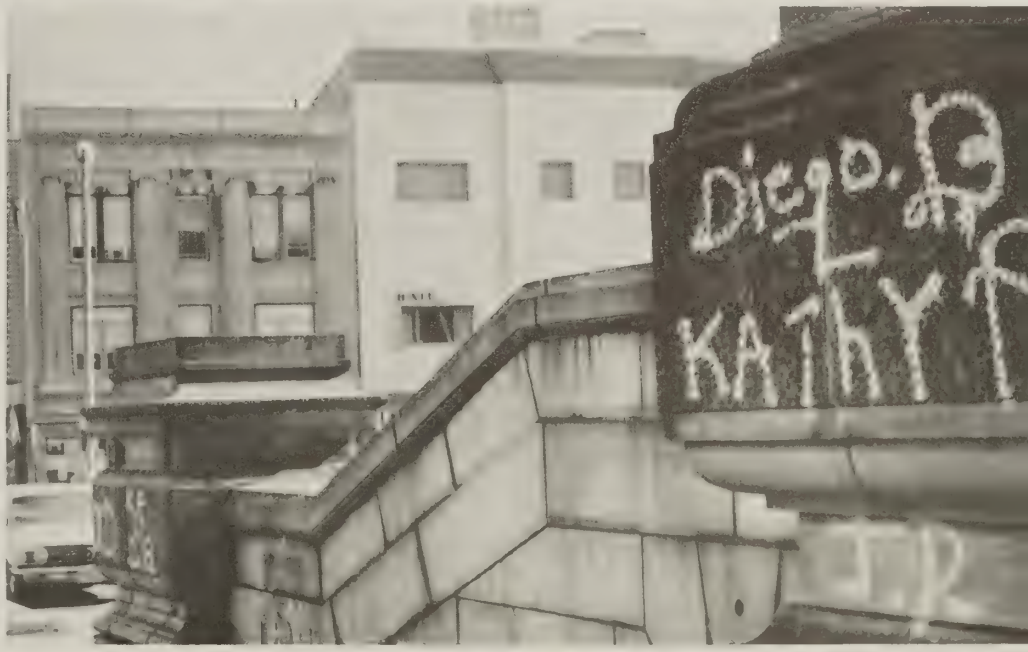
Second, there are no general cultural facilities in the City, other than the limited ones at local colleges. The City needs such spaces -- for concerts, for band and dance and music recitals, for meeting rooms for community-interest groups. The many and varied rooms in this building are ideally suited for this.

Third, the City and County administrations are in need of added work space -- particularly court space. This building was constructed as a court house; hence there are a number of court chambers which can once again serve that function.

It is suggested that as a course of action the City move to obtain title to this property, that it hire an architectural consultant to study and design the re-use of the building, and that, finally, it proceed with the renovation. At the same time, a group of distinguished citizens should be appointed, on a non-partisan basis, to form an advisory board to oversee the renovation, to lead a public subscription and fund-raising effort, to investigate the possibility of foundation and governmental aid, and to draw up a plan for the care and operation of the center.

The lawn around the building should be re-landscaped, and a formal setting should be created to express and complement the dignified structure. If possible, heavy landscaping should be placed on the boundary area between the Courthouse and the new administration building to create a unified space. Parking on any portion of the front lawn should be eliminated.

COURTHOUSE PLAZA


KATHY

PROPOSAL: Recreation for the Handicapped

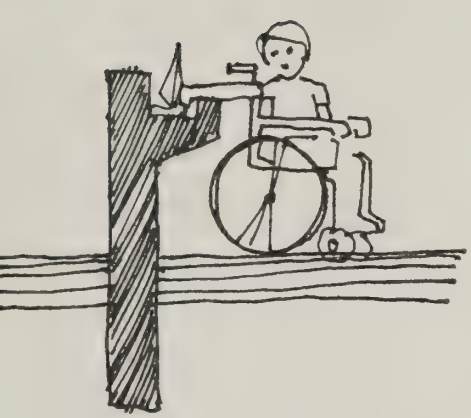
"Children with special problems need specially designed playgrounds, but -- it cannot be repeated too often -- their essential requirements are the same as those of normal children. The environment in which they play must respond to that part of them which is healthy and capable, with help, of growth and development."

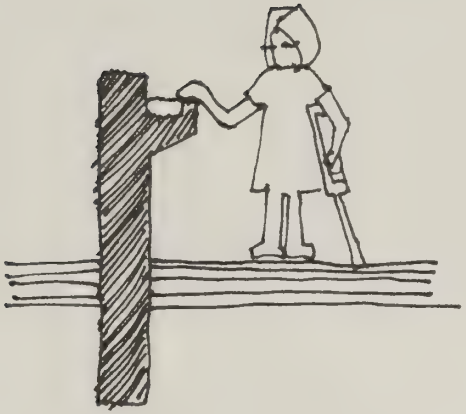
-Richard Dattner, AIA
in Design for Play

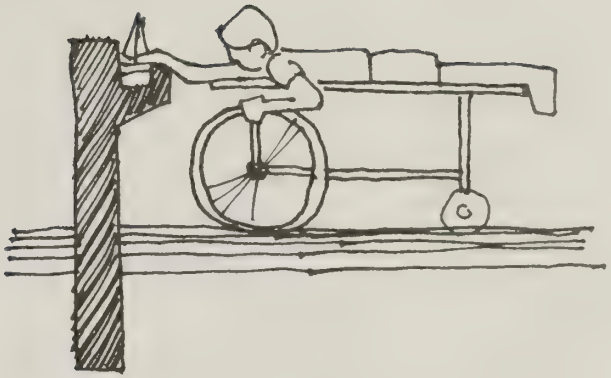
The municipal government has an obligation to provide for the recreation and leisure-time needs of all segments of its population: youth, adults, senior citizens, and the handicapped.

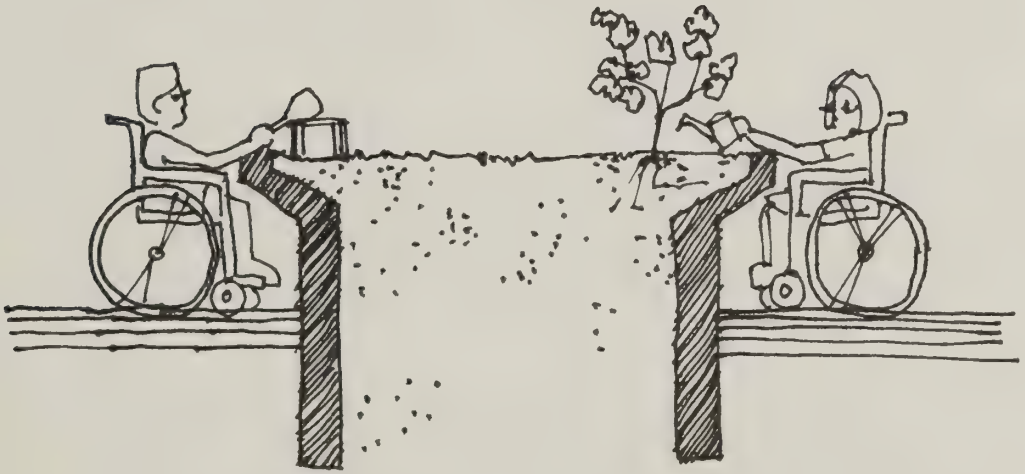
At the risk of oversimplification, there are three basic kinds of handicapped persons: the physically handicapped, the emotionally disturbed, and the retarded. All have definite physical needs, and, in most cases, definite physical limitations. It would be presumptuous for the staff of the Division of Planning to try to devise a specific plan, at this point, to try to meet the needs of all three of these groups. Instead, the City should consult with doctors, recreation leaders, education specialists, and architect-designers with special expertise in this field. These specialists will then be able to make specific recommendations as to the best location, design, and facilities to adequately serve this segment of the population.

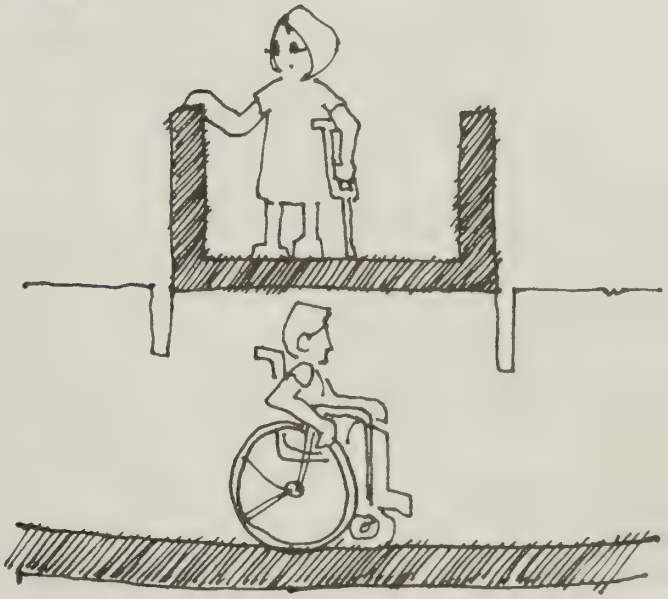
Examples of play equipment designed for physically-handicapped children include raised sandboxes and water channels, shallow wading pools, and gentle ramps for wheelchairs and children with crutches. Water-channels and sand allow emotionally-disturbed children to act out their aggressions and hostilities. Modular forms of soft materials provide retarded children many opportunities for play, such as gentle grass mounds and water-channels.











PROPOSAL: Additional and Expanded Recreational Programming

This plan is concerned first and foremost with planning for new and improved physical recreational facilities. But in a program such as this that involves extensive research, it becomes obvious that recreation and leisure-time programming becomes equally important. Some programs listed below have been tried in Jersey City on a limited scale, but due to curtailment or general lack of funds, staff shortages, and other problems, are no longer carried on at all or to any significant extent. Nevertheless, they are programs which have validity for this City, and which, with enough effort on the part of the City's government and citizens, can be made workable.

MOBILE RECREATION PROGRAMS, as provided by the City of New York, provide various recreation programs and activities on wheels, and move from community to community at the request of area residents. The program provides puppets, marionettes, professional boxers, live bands, dances, magicians, zoo animals, arts and crafts, a sports mobile, and a skate-mobile. Enclosed areas, such as play streets, provide the space for these activities.

The TENNIS CONCESSIONAIRE PROGRAM operates as an arrangement between the City of New York and private concessionaires, whereby the concessionaires construct, operate, and maintain domed tennis courts on City-owned property. During the summer the courts are operated without a user charge provided the user obtained a $15 permit from the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Department. During the winter, the concessionaires may charge the fair market price for their courts.

An URBAN FISHING PROGRAM is sponsored by Essex County: each summer approximately 1,000 youths are bussed to Branch Brook and Orange Parks. This program is jointly funded by the Newark Department of Community Affairs, the Essex County Park Commission, the New Jersey Bureau of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Bureau of Sport Fishery. A similar program, under the joint sponsorship of the Hudson County Park Commission and the Jersey City Division of Parks, could be initiated locally, using North Hudson Park, or if it was cleaned, the lake at Lincoln Park.

JERSEY CITY AWAKE, Jersey City's cultural program, was instituted in the summer of 1972 and was revived again in the summer of 1973. During its initial season it provided various musical and cultural events at various locations throughout the City. It shows every sign of meeting with equal success during its second season, although its major problem is that it is not fiscally capable or reaching nearly enough people. It has provided such events as music and theater in the parks, and has sponsored the visit of the environmental sloop, "Clearwater." Events sponsored this summer included visits from the Metropolitan Opera Studio Company, Duke Ellington, a U.S. Navy Band, and the Newark Boys Choir. This program should be greatly expanded on a year-round basis, and should make an appeal for public financial subscription to its efforts.

CONVENTIONAL RECREATION PROGRAMMING in the city is inhibited by a lack of funds for both equipment and staff. The most extensive and visible of the existing recreation programs is the Little League program. Although it is an outstanding program, it is intended for only a select group of youth; girls and boys whose interests lie elsewhere are not provided for in recreation programs to any significant extent. The City should vastly increase its funds for recreation programs so that a number of other activities -- cultural, arts, and crafts -- can be expanded.

STREET FAIRS are another form of community-oriented recreation and cultural activity which flourish in other parts of the metropolitan area, but which seem to not have been attempted on a significant scale in Jersey City. These day-long festivities are usually sponsored by a neighborhood or block association -- of which Jersey City has many -- with the full cooperation of the municipal government in provision of street-closings, police protection, and intensified refuse removal. The residents of the block organize the activity themselves, and provide food, game and prize booths, "white elephant" sales, music, and other events. Races and competitions are frequently held. In most cases, profits from the fair go for block beautification.

A CITY FAIR was instituted in the summer of 1970 by business, civic, and community leaders in Baltimore. Basically, it is a three day festival of life in the city, the focus being the city's neighborhoods. The flavor of the entire city is captured under a series of huge inner-connected circus tents housing community exhibits boasting each neighborhood's accomplishments and wares. Thousands of local citizens were involved, taking tickets, selling shish kebabs and crab cakes, distributing programs, constructing displays, making items for sale, cooking food, and putting up posters. The effort involved over 10,000 citizens, and it was all volunteer work. There is no reason why something on the order of this fair could not take place in Jersey City; suitable sites include both Journal Square and Lincoln Park. This type of event becomes all the more feasible in Jersey City given the varied ethnic backgrounds of its residents.

BLOCK CLOSINGS on a temporary basis can provide recreation to neighborhoods where recreation facilities are deficient, and there are no available sites for immediate construction. During non-rush hours, the city can provide portable play equipment, including portable pools, an intensified effort to distribute spray caps for fire hydrants, and, with the cooperation of the police department, close the street to through traffic.

These are just a few ideas of what other cities are doing. They might not all be appropriate to Jersey City, but most of them are. All it takes is a little imagination, a lot of time, and, most of all, a genuine regard for the City and its residents.

toward an open space policy for jersey city

The specific proposals mentioned in this plan are just one recommended approach toward the solution of the park and open space problem in Jersey City. However, it is important to note that they are just that: an approach, not a solution. There can never be too much open space in this city. As time passes, as the nature of neighborhoods and the entire city change, there will be both the opportunity and the need to create additional open space.

But perhaps we need to expand our definition of open space from the simple one of "publicly-owned property for active and passive recreation" to a behavioral one: if it allows people to act freely, with no necessary relationship to ownership, type of use, size, or landscape character. We must limit this, of course, to speaking of places normally accessible and able to be used by a significant number of city people. But even within this limited definition there are open spaces throughout the city which add to the total "liveability" and openness of the environment. The great broad space of Journal Square is one example; while it is not of particularly good design, it nevertheless provides a "breathing space" and an opportunity for public use. The large plaza area of the new PATH Journal Square Transportation Center will serve a similar function. Similar spaces exist on a neighborhood level, as well, as in the court treatment of Stegman Place, Stegman Court, and Stegman Terrace in the Greenville section of the city, and in Carlton Avenue in the Hudson City area. There are also numerous spaces -- for both passive and active recreation, as well as for basic "openness," provided through churches, public and parochial schools, and cemeteries.

The City must encourage, even require, the provision of new and usable open spaces in the design of new buildings in the city. It does not take a great deal of imagination to see how much more pleasant and liveable the high-rise apartment buildings in Downtown and Journal Square could have been if they had been surrounded by lawn and trees rather than a sea of asphalt. There are several tools available to the City to provide more usable open space in future development in Jersey City.

Zoning. When the City completes its new zoning and Planned Unit Development regulations, replacing its antiquated and highly inadequate zoning ordinance, new requirements for the provision of open space will be included. For example, there are incentives through a floor-area-ratio provision for high

and medium-rise apartment and office buildings, wherein the builder is given a "bonus" of additional floor space for each amount of open or plaza space provided. Diligent site-plan review will be provided by the Planning Board to insure high standards of design and to maximize the relationship of this space to the surrounding neighborhoods. Zoning can also be used to insure that attractive landscaping and open spaces are provided around new industrial development; in large industrial parks such as are likely to be developed along the southern portion of the New York Bay waterfront, it would not be unreasonable to require the provision of park space for employee usage. Zoning and subdivision control can also be used to provide open space in intermediate-scale residential development through the concept of cluster zoning; instead of the standard lot with tiny spaces of marginal utility, houses are clustered closer together, or even attached, and the marginal bits of space are pooled into larger tracts as common space for all residents to use.

Planned Unit Development. The intention of Planned Unit Development is to encourage more comprehensive planning of major development schemes in order to provide housing variety, convenience stores, public facilities, and designed open spaces. The designed open spaces would consist of a minimum of 25 percent of the tract area, and would be limited to uses improved for active and passive recreation. It would be feasible on any substantive tract cleared for redevelopment throughout the city. Operation Breakthrough, now nearing completion at Kennedy Boulevard and Newark Avenue, is an example of Planned Unit Development.

Rooftops. Rooftops are another often overlooked source of open space. As ground space continues to diminish as we build upon it, we should make it a matter of policy to place on roofs at least some of the amenities lost as the land is consumed. It is now a rather frequent occurrence to find gardens, sun-decks, and even swimming pools atop many new high rise apartments in the metropolitan area. Additionally, however, the roofs of parking garages and even office buildings and department stores offer the opportunity to replace long-lost open space in urban centers. It also is potentially a valid way to provide outdoor recreation areas where such spaces on the ground are almost non-existent, as in Journal Square, the heart of Jersey City. Apartment dwellers, shoppers, and office workers have limited times throughout the day which could be spent in passive or active recreation pursuits. Landscaped gardens, sitting areas, and even tennis courts are just a few of the activities which could be accommodated on rooftops. The Division of Planning and the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency should encourage builders and owners to provide this type of facility in future projects in the Journal Square area.

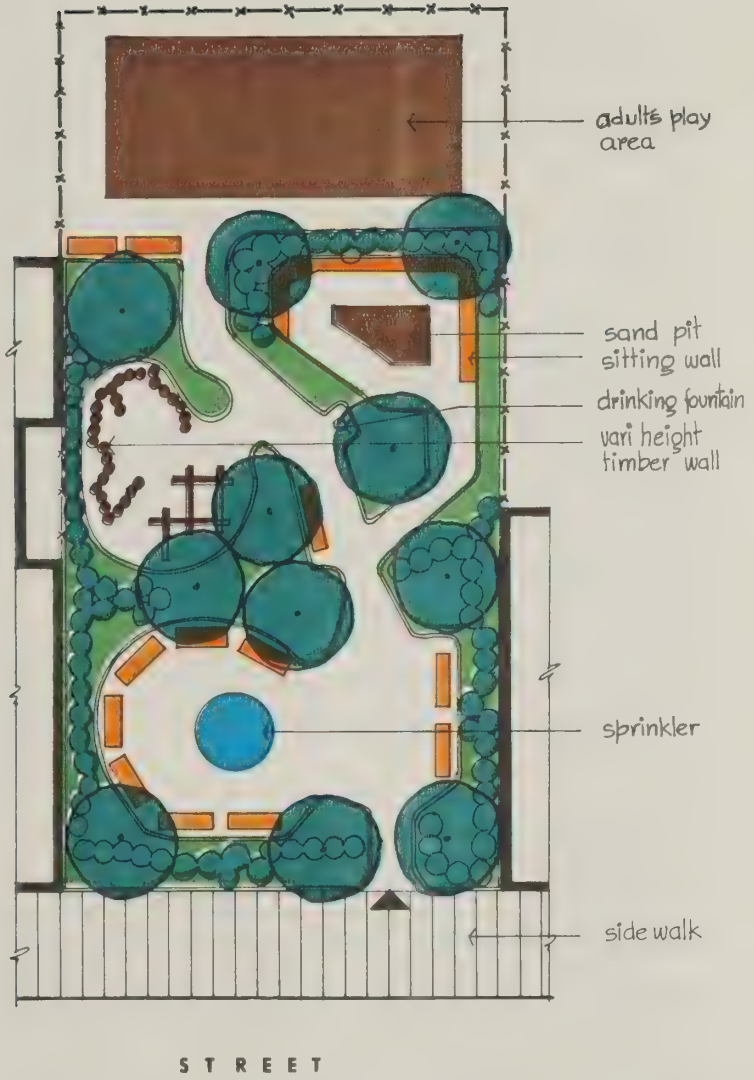
Sanitary Landfill. Sanitary landfill is a method through which additional park and open space land can be created where none existed before and is also a possible partial solution to the

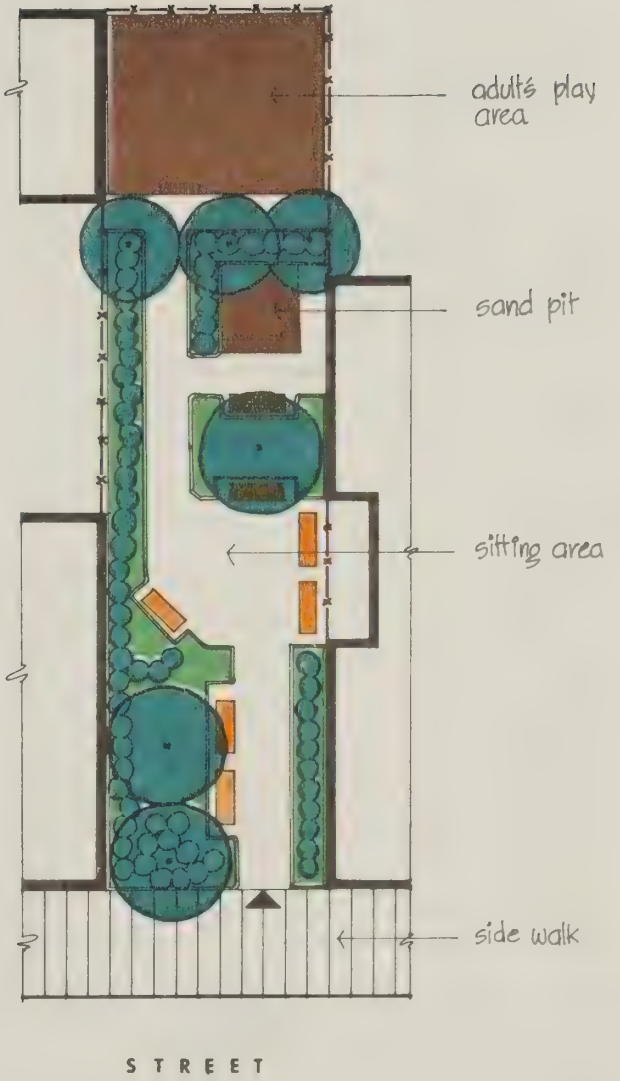
city's ever growing refuse disposal problem. It should be emphasized that sanitary landfill is just that: an efficient and clean method of refuse disposal, wherein each layer of refuse is covered with a clean cover material, such as construction waste and dirt. An efficient sanitary landfill will inhibit pests, seal in odors, prevent water infiltration, and will prevent blowing and scattering and create parklands in relatively short period of time.

Tax Lien and Vacant Land. The City of Jersey City, from time to time, acquires title to private property throughout all neighborhoods as a result of default in property tax payments. The great majority of these properties lie in predominantly low-income areas, resulting in the creation of abandoned houses or derelict lots. The City government has a full-time agency whose principal task is to study the potential re-use of these properties, and periodically place selected properties up for auction. Where a large group of adjacent properties, usually a minimum of three or four, are concentrated, the City occasionally deems it proper to hold these properties until a suitable package can be arranged for sale to a potential developer who will construct new low-or moderate-income housing on the consolidated site. However, some lots, usually in the most deteriorated neighborhoods, are apparently not marketable. Ironically, these are most frequently the neighborhoods where the need for additional park space is greatest.

Many of these unmarketable lots can be used for recreation space. The benefits of using city-owned land are obvious: acquisition and, in some cases, demolition costs are not involved. Thus, the only costs, are those of equipment and maintenance. Those lots being preserved for package sale are not totally unusable for these purposes, either. The larger parcels can be used as temporary ballfields until they are ready for sale. An example of this is the temporary field established on the Henderson Street Urban Renewal Project site in downtown Jersey City. Upon acceptance of this plan, a definite liaison will be established between the Mayor's Office, Division of Planning, and the Real Estate Division to coordinate the potential use of city-owned land for recreation and open space purposes.

Additionally, there are several areas in the city where there are vacant or abandoned warehouse or industrial buildings located in predominantly residential neighborhoods. The Division of Planning is in the process of beginning an in-depth analysis of each of seven major neighborhoods in the City. One aspect of these studies will be the consideration of these warehouse and factory buildings, and the prospects for a new use for the particular building and/or site. Such a re-use could be for recreation, and if it was a suitable structure, it could be used for year-round indoor recreation such as skating or basketball. It might be determined however, that the best use for a block of land this substantial would be as a site for new housing development, in which





TYPICAL TWO LOT AND ONE LOT DEVELOPMENT

SCALE IN FEET
0 5 10 20 30

case the city would require, through zoning and site-plan review, that adequate open and active recreation space be included as an integral part of the site design.

Administrative Policy. In addition to policy on open space acquisition and expansion, the City must develop a consistent and solid administrative policy with regard to public recreation facilities. It is obvious that the past fragmented administration has been ineffectual, although recent organizational changes in the City governmental structure should do much to alleviate many of these problems.

park and open space funding sources

Funding sources are always a problem in any municipal government: there are too many different agencies and aspects of local government vying for a severely limited amount of funds. Consequently the amount of new or rehabilitated park and open space that can realistically be provided by the City is limited. Fortunately, there are some other sources of funding available from the State and Federal Governments. However, in light of changing Federal priorities, the future of some of these programs is not clear.

1. Green Acres Local Matching Assistance Program. This program is administered by the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection of the State of New Jersey, and provides 50 percent of the cost of land to be used for open space.

2. Land and Water Conservation Fund. This program provides for grants of 50 percent to municipal and county agencies for the acquisition and development of open space land. Each acquisition or development must be in accord with the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan prepared by the State.

The program is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, through the Office of the Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

3. Architecture and Environmental Arts Program. Grants under this program are administered by the National Endowment for the Arts, an agency of the Federal Government. The particular grant for which Jersey City is apparently eligible under this program is called "City Options." It provides 50 percent of the funding, usually to a maximum of $50,000, to assist communities in planning for the preservation and enhancement of "those special settings and areas and places within a city that provide distinctive character and identity." The areas surrounding Hamilton Park, Van Vorst Park, and Paulus Hook Park, including the rehabilitation of those parks, are projects that could be planned with funds from this program.

4. Legacy of Parks and Community Development Revenue Sharing. In 1973 Jersey City received a matching grant of $350,000 under the Legacy of Parks Program, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, to build five new parks and rebuild five others. The City had intended to use this program in the future to continue development of parks, playgrounds, and other open spaces. Unfortunately, the Federal Government terminated this program as of January 5, 1973. The outlook at this time is that this program, along with urban renewal, Model Cities, water and sewer facilities, rehabilitation loans, and public facility loans will be combined under the Community Development Special Revenue Sharing Program (CDRS). CDRS is intended to become effective July 1, 1974. At present, however, there is no assurance that Congress will approve the program. Thus, the present situation is that there is no money available from HUD for the acquisition and development of open space, and it is only speculation at this point that funds will again become available for such activities in mid-1974.

5. Recreation Support Program. This program is administered by the Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington. Funds are allocated each summer to Community Action Agencies (CAA) for such purposes as the purchase of athletic equipment, materials for arts, crafts, and games, for sponsoring special events, entertainment, transportation to State Parks, and additional cultural programs. The CAA in Jersey City is the Department of Human Resources; it has received funding under this program for the summers of 1972 and 1973, and has used the funds for items ranging from play equipment to boat trips to Rye Beach for younsters. However, as with many other Federal programs, future funding of this program is in doubt.

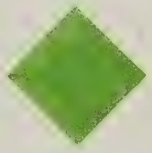
6. Summer Youth Transportation Program: Jersey City received $7,500 from this program for each of the summers of 1972 and 1973. The City has used the program to finance recreational activities and bus trips out of the City for as many disadvantaged youths as possible. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. At the present time, future funding of the program remains unclear.

7. Community Development Corporation. The Division of Planning is presently analyzing the possibility of establishing a Community Development Corporation as a new funding technique to deal with such problems as providing decent housing, jobs, and open space. The Corporation would have the power to float bonds outside the city's normal debt limit. The proceeds from the bonds would be used to finance the construction or rehabilitation of housing, to provide low-interest loans for industries desiring to locate in the city, and to develop recreation facilities.

The Corporation could finance the development of new recreation facilities provided it had an agreement with some agency or organization to pay the annual principal and interest on the bonds. Such agencies or organizations could include the City of State through annual allocations in their budgets or a private corporation wishing to provide a community service. Use of such a program could allow the City of Jersey City, with virtually no bonding ability, to develop extensive recreation facilities.

Summary. The only program on which the City can count for funding in the future is the Green Acres Program. This program can be used for land acquisition only. The only program available for development of open space presently is the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program which the Federal government has cut from $300 million in the present fiscal year to $55 million for the next fiscal year. Thus, for park acquisition and development the City will have to rely more and more on its limited resources until such time as CDRS is passed or some other Federal funds are allocated to open space acquisition and development.

As far as funds for recreation are concerned, the future situation is very unclear. Those city agencies most concerned with parks and recreation will have to stay abreast of all developments at the State and Federal level which affect the funding of recreation programs.



summary

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of the gross inadequacies of the parks, recreation, and open space system in Jersey City, and points out the factors and conditions leading to these deficiencies. The major points of this study are summarized below. These points, however, must be examined in the context of the discussion and data found in the body of the report.

- Using National Recreation Association standards of 10 acres of local recreation space for every 1,000 persons, Jersey City should have 2,600 acres of space. In reality, it has only 430 acres, or 1.65 acres per 1,000 persons.

- The neighborhood with the greatest amount of park space is Bergen, because of Lincoln Park. Journal Square has the least amount: less than .3 acres for over 16,000 people.

- The Bureau of Parks staff has been reduced by nearly 55% in the past ten years.

- Of the 1973 Parks staff of 107, 44 employees are assigned to non-parks related work such as City Hall maintenance.

- There are approximately 40 potential recreation centers in the city; the Bureau only has the capability of running programs at fourteen centers.

- Programming is largely geared to Little League baseball, with insufficient emphasis on more varied recreation activities.

- A park-user survey finds that fear and filth are the 2 most often cited reasons for lack of attendance.

- The lack of personal safety is a very definite factor in the decline of park usage by neighborhood residents.

- The degree of vandalism has become so extreme that it is impossible for the Bureau of Parks to keep up with repairs.

- Fragmentation of work assignments between the Bureau of Parks and other city agencies results in major park repairs not being performed in the parks at times when they are most essential, if they are indeed performed at all.

On the positive side:

- A grant by the Federal Legacy of Parks program has resulted in 10 new or redeveloped parks in the City.

. Recreation space will be included in 3 new urban renewal sites throughout the City.

. Oakley Oval (Enos Jones Memorial Field) has been constructed through a Federal Open Space Grant.

. Specific improvements or rehabilitation is proposed for all of the existing city parks and playgrounds, including new benches, repair of play equipment, and the installation of high-intensity lights.

. Several new park concepts are proposed, including:

(1) A Mall at Journal Square

(2) Tree-planting programs along several shopping streets.

(3) "Adventure" playgrounds for children.

(4) Vest-pocket parks on shopping streets and on the waterfront.

(5) Interior block parks.

(6) A linear belt park throughout the city.

(7) Out-of-town parks at two of the city's reservoir sites.

(8) A linear block park created through a street narrowing.

(9) Recreation designs for handicapped children.

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